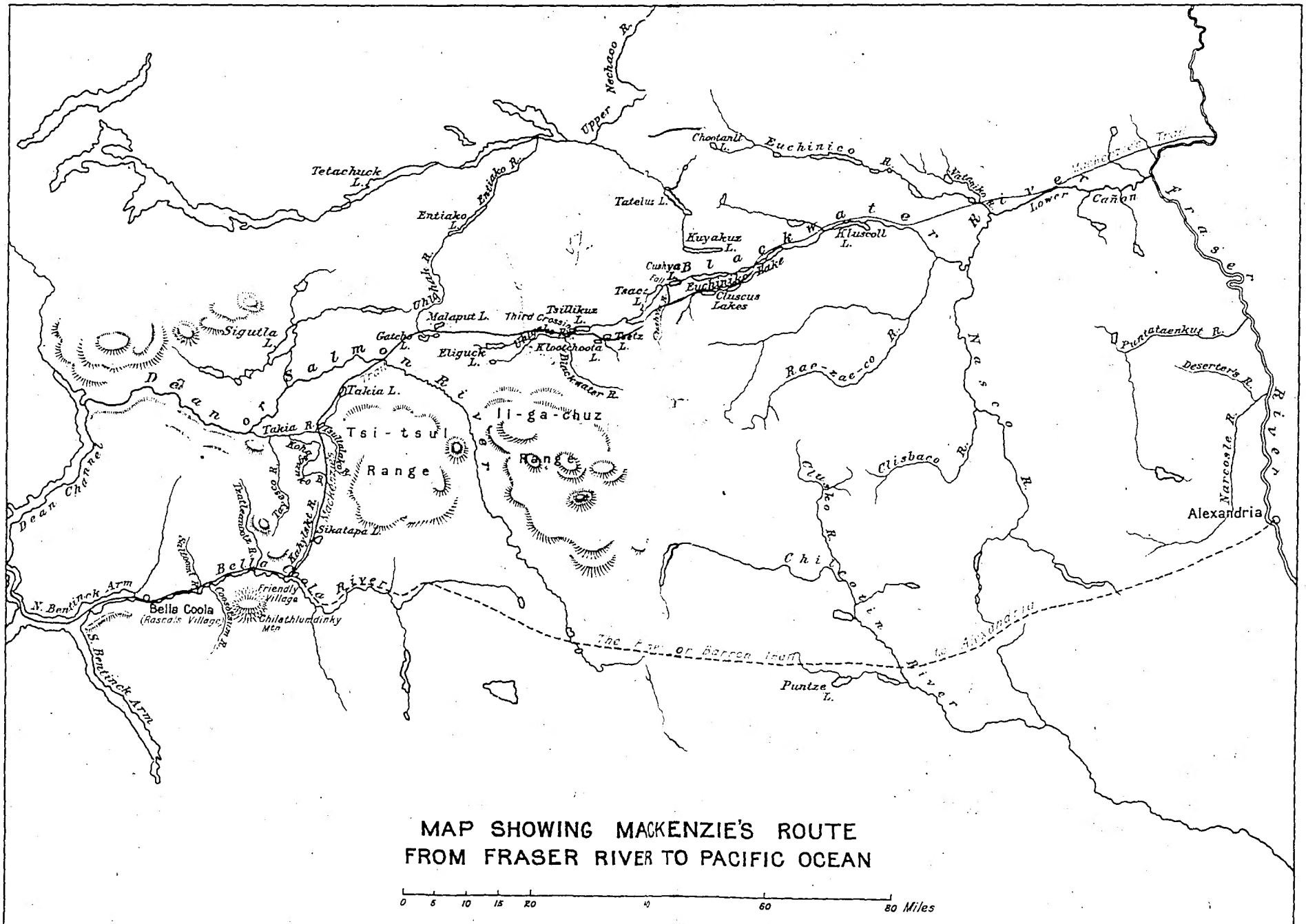


MAP SHOWING MACKENZIE'S ROUTE FROM FRASER RIVER TO PACIFIC OCEAN

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Mackenzie of Canada

The Life and Adventures of
Alexander Mackenzie, Discoverer



SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

Mackenzie of Canada

The Life and Adventures of Alexander Mackenzie, Discoverer

BY

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FELLOW ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MEMBER CANADIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, MEMBER BRITISH COLUMBIA HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, MEMBER OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY, MEMBER WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE
	FOREWORD	ix
	INTRODUCTION	xi
I.	EARLY EXPLORERS AND FUR-TRADERS	1
II.	THE ADVENT OF ALEXANDER MACKENZIE	17
III.	THE EXPLORATION OF THE MACKENZIE RIVER	32
IV.	THE RETURN TO FORT CHIPEWYAN	74
V.	IN WINTER QUARTERS ON PEACE RIVER	95
VI.	FROM FORKS FORT TO FRASER RIVER	111
VII.	FROM THE FRASER TO THE PACIFIC	135
VIII.	THE RETURN TO FORT CHIPEWYAN	215
IX.	FROM CHIPEWYAN TO MONTREAL AND SCOTLAND. THE LAST EXPLORATION	231
X.	THE RETURN TO SCOTLAND	245
XI.	MACKENZIE'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND INFLUENCE	264
	NOTES	289
	APPENDIX I.	311
	APPENDIX II.	314
	GENEALOGICAL TREE	319
	AUTHORITIES CONSULTED	321
	INDEX	323

ILLUSTRATIONS.

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE . . .	*Frontispiece*	
LUSKENTYRE HOUSE, STORNOWAY, BIRTHPLACE OF SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE . .	*Facing p.*	18
THE RAMPARTS, LOWER MACKENZIE RIVER .	,,	58
JUNCTION OF PEACE AND SMOKY RIVERS .	,,	104
BELLA COOLA RIVER DELTA . . .	,,	196
MACKENZIE ROCK, FROM THE SOUTH . .	,,	201
MACKENZIE'S INSCRIPTION	,,	205
SOUTH-EAST FACE OF ROCK ON WHICH MACKENZIE SLEPT, 22ND JULY 1793 . .	,,	263
BRONZE TABLET ON MACKENZIE MEMORIAL MONUMENT, DEAN CHANNEL, BRITISH COLUMBIA	,,	284

SKETCH MAPS.

MAP SHOWING MACKENZIE'S ROUTE FROM FRASER RIVER TO PACIFIC OCEAN	*Front Board*	
ARCTIC OCEAN AND MACKENZIE RIVER DELTA .	*Page*	71
JUNCTION OF ATHABASCA, PEACE, AND SLAVE RIVERS .		102
MACKENZIE'S EXPLORATIONS ON THE PACIFIC . .		212



FOREWORD.

NOTWITHSTANDING the romantic story of his life, and the tremendous importance of his achievements as a discoverer and explorer, to say nothing of his generosity and philanthropy as the Laird of Avoch, it is remarkable that no book has hitherto been published giving an account of the life and work of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. That omission this volume is intended to supply. From time to time accounts have been published of his activities, but most of these have been grossly inaccurate, more especially in respect to the early years of his life, while of his closing years practically nothing has been said.

Thanks to the courtesy of Sir Alexander's descendants, it has been possible to give authoritative information about those periods, culled from family records and other sources. Among those who have been generously helpful in furthering my inquiries, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr John Morrison of Stornoway; Rev. Edwin J. Brechin, O.B.E., of Avoch; Sir Alexander's grand-daughter, Mrs Heald (Alexandra Isabel Mackenzie); and his niece, Miss Margaret Dowie Kirkland, whose wonderful memory and knowledge of the Mackenzie family affairs are undimmed, notwithstanding her advanced age of ninety-four years. She was a frequent inmate of the Mackenzie home, both in London and at Avoch, and had unequalled opportunities of acquiring full information about her distinguished relative.

M. S. WADE.

KAMLOOPS, BRITISH COLUMBIA,
Christmas 1926.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is somewhat remarkable that the exploits of Alexander Mackenzie have not been more highly extolled and given wider publicity. For some inexplicable reason the man and his achievements appear to have been overlooked or forgotten save by a few historians. One turns in vain to many sources commonly resorted to for information concerning him. Many encyclopedias do not even mention his name; one such work of reference, allegedly a reliable repository of knowledge, devotes about thirty lines to him, and in that limited space succeeds in being inaccurate. Some Canadian school histories do not refer to him at all, an omission that is without excuse.

There are not wanting those who do not hesitate to claim for others the honour that rightly belongs to Mackenzie. As an instance, John Fiske, the American historian and philosopher, in his 'The Discovery of America,' published in 1892, states that the North American continent was first crossed by Lewis and Clark in 1805, totally ignoring the fact that Mackenzie anticipated that expedition by twelve years.

As the first civilised human being to descend the Mackenzie River to the Arctic Ocean, and whose eyes first rested upon that expanse of sea stretching from Icy Cape to Coronation Gulf; the first to give the world an inkling

of the existence of the Yukon River; the first to discover, and descend for a considerable distance, the Fraser River, and the first to reach the Pacific Ocean overland north of Mexico, Mackenzie merits wider recognition than has been given him.

In dealing with the subject of the man and his discoveries, the writer has divided it into several sections. The first of these gives a brief review of the early land explorations and the circumstances leading to the formation of the North-West Company, with which concern Mackenzie was intimately associated for many years. The second section treats of his entrance into the fur trade, while the succeeding divisions are devoted to his explorations and the closing years of his life.

At the end of the narrative a list of authorities consulted is given.

Mackenzie of Canada.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY EXPLORERS AND FUR-TRADERS.

FROM the time that the hardy Norse navigators from Iceland, the Cabots, Columbus, Vespucius, Drake, Cartier, and Hudson from England, France, and Spain, descended upon the coasts of North America, down to the present era, this continent has attracted the attention of a continuous stream of explorers by both land and sea. Great as were the exploits of the early navigators, the hazardous enterprises of the dauntless adventurers who plunged into the unknown wilderness by land achieved that which was no less great.

In the roster of those explorers by land occur the names, among others, of Hennepin, Joliet, Marquette, La Salle, Verendrye, Radisson, Grosseillier, Hearne, Kelsey, Finlay, Simon Fraser, David Thompson, Alexander Mackenzie, Franklin, Richardson, Back, Dease, Thomas Simpson, Campbell, Tyrrell. The story of their achievements is a glorious chapter in the history of North America, and more especially of that broad domain extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the international boundary line with the United States to the Polar regions, the Dominion of Canada.

The motives that actuated these men varied. Some

of the explorers, Hennepin, La Salle, Louis Joliet, Jacques Marquette, members of the Society of Jesus, sought to extend the benefits of Christianity to virgin fields. Their zeal in the cause of religion did not prevent them from observing the fertility of the country through which their travels led them, or from taking note of the natural resources of the land, of the character of its native population, of the vastness of its forests, the immensity of its plains, and the grandeur of its rivers. Others sought to reap a rich material reward by trading with the aborigines for furs, risking their lives in penetrating unknown regions where dwelt people of strange customs. Still others were moved by a desire to add to the prestige of their race by priority of discovery, and by adding to the constantly increasing fund of human knowledge.

To all these men, the mysteries of the unknown possessed an irresistible charm. The daily encountering and surmounting of difficulties, journeying under trying conditions that tested alike their endurance and courage, battling with the elements, with the strong currents of rapid, rock-strewn streams, overcoming the opposition of hostile natives, served but to whet their appetite for further adventure. In these enterprises the first in the field were the French, who, directing their ventures from the towns of New France, added laurels to the name of their homeland. After them came the British.

From the natives and other sources the early explorers heard of the existence of a great western sea, and in the minds of many of them, in the midst of their commercial avocation, there ever lurked a hope that their wanderings would conduct them to that goal of their dreams. One of them was Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de la Verendrye. Prior to his adventuring, Du Luth, La Noue, and Charlevoix had been commissioned to learn what they could concerning possible overland routes to that western sea, the Pacific Ocean. Accompanied by his sons, Verendrye made his way far to the west, dis-

covered the Red River of the North, and established Fort Rouge at the mouth of the Assiniboine River—the site of the present city of Winnipeg. Pressing still farther west, he established Fort la Reine (Portage la Prairie), and, with that as his base, essayed to reach the Pacific. Obstacles interfered with the carrying out of his plans, but the work he had begun was continued by two of his sons, who reached the headwaters of the Missouri River in Wyoming, and gazed upon the barrier of the Rocky Mountains. Insurmountable difficulties necessitated the abandonment of their project, nor was the attempt renewed by them. It was left for another explorer, a young Scotsman, one Alexander Mackenzie, to accomplish that which they had failed to achieve, to scale the ramparts of the great mountain barriers and feast his eyes upon the waters of the mighty western sea.

Prior to the explorations of the Jesuit Fathers, La Salle, Marquette, Joliet, and Hennepin, and long before the Verendryes penetrated the unknown far west, the great inland sea, discovered in 1610 by Henry Hudson, the English sea captain, and named after him Hudson's Bay, was entered by several British navigators. One of these, Captain Gillam, entered that bay in 1668, with a pioneer expedition to engage in fur-trading on behalf of Prince Rupert and a number of influential Londoners. Between the date of Hudson's discovery of the bay that bears his name, and the trading expedition under Gillam, Captain Button (afterwards knighted), Captain Luke Foxe of London, and Thomas James of Bristol visited it. Captain Button wintered at the mouth of the Nelson River and named it Port Nelson, and there subsequently the Hudson's Bay Company established York Factory.

Out of Gillam's expedition arose that company of adventurers of England, trading into Hudson's Bay, known as the Hudson's Bay Company, which obtained

a Royal Charter from King Charles the Second in 1670, and acting on that authority, established trading posts at various points along the shores of Hudson's Bay. Administrative powers were vested in a local Governor whose authority was paramount. One, Governor Sargeant, was urged in letters he received from the Governor and Council in England to send men into the interior "to draw down the Indians by fair and gentle means to trade with us." Little was done to further these ends, or in the way of western exploration, during the earlier years of their occupancy of the country, such activities being restricted, in the main, to localities more or less tributary to the bay. It appeared, indeed, to be the general policy of those in charge of the trading posts to cling closely to them.

This policy of masterly passivity was first broken by a mere youth of barely eighteen years of age, who volunteered to journey to Churchill River and fix upon a site for a new fort. One report of this expedition of Henry Kelsey states that in 1688 Governor George Geyer was instructed to send him, "because we are informed that he is a very active lad, delighting much in the Indians' company, and being never better pleased than when he is travelling amongst them." Two years later Kelsey undertook a journey in the country of the Assiniboine, and in 1691 he is credited with having accompanied the Indians on a journey which he estimated at four hundred miles or more, penetrating as far as the haunts of the buffalo and the grizzly bear. On those journeys he took possession of the country in the name of the Hudson's Bay Company with all the assurance of the period, and at the same time managed to secure the goodwill and trade of the natives, one of whose women he married after the fashion of the country, and took her back to York Factory with him. With these expeditions the activities of the Company in the way of exploration seem to have become exhausted for the time

being. There is no record of any other officer or employee of the Company engaging in similar journeyings until many years later. Such of the Indians that wished to obtain the white man's goods in exchange for furs, took them to the forts to trade, and the traders appear to have rested content with that arrangement. It saved them trouble and the Company expense. But such conditions could not long continue unchallenged.

The Hudson's Bay Company were not the only ones engaged in the fur trade. The French had engaged in it in New France for many years, and gradually the French traders extended their field of operations. Forcing their way up torrential streams and through dense forests, traversing in frail craft the wind-swept inland seas, they penetrated the wilderness towards the setting sun. First they made their way to the shores of the Great Lakes, but their eagerness led them still farther afield; there was always a still unknown west to be explored and exploited, inviting, alluring. Gradually the mysterious unknown was opened to the gaze of the intrepid adventurous spirits who lifted the veil, and where none but the natives and wild animals had trod, the feet of white men wandered. Far beyond the Great Lakes lay the vast territory Kelsey had visited, and which remained a *terra incognita* to the white trader until the Verendryes, in 1713, aflame with the fire of zeal in the cause of exploration, established Fort St Charles on the west shore of the Lake of the Woods as a base for their future operations.

In 1756 the French had a chain of forts extending from Montreal far to the west. Their activities were ubiquitous. St Denis Bouremont, Dutisme, the Mallets, Le Gardeur de St Pierre, De la Corne, and others had explored the western country. Trading posts were found at Presq'ile, Le Boeuf, Venango, and Du Quesne, commanding the navigation of the Ohio River. They had posts on the Illinois, Wabash, St Joseph's, and Wisconsin

Rivers. French settlements existed at New Orleans and other points on the Mississippi. Posts had been established at several places on the Red River, as well as on the Arkansas, Kansas, and Osage Rivers; at Prairies du Chien and Lake Pepin in Wisconsin. Bougainville, writing two years before the British conquest of Canada, said: "The Post of the Western Sea is the most advanced towards the north; it is situated among many Indian tribes with whom we trade, and who have intercourse with the English towards Hudson Bay. We have there several forts built of stockades, trusted generally to the care of one or two officers, seven or eight soldiers, and eighty *engagés Canadiens*. We can push farther the discoveries we have made in that country, and communicate even with California. The Post of the Mer de l'Ouest includes the forts of St Pierre, St Charles, Dauphin, Poskoiac, and Des Prairies (De la Jonquière), all of which are built with palisades that can give protection only against the Indians."

The French traders made great inroads in the trade of the Hudson's Bay Company. The Indians found it more convenient to have the goods they desired brought almost to their doors, instead of carrying their furs many hundreds of miles to the Company's forts. To counteract this, the Company despatched Anthony Hendry in 1754 to the Saskatchewan district, his mission being to endeavour to divert the trade in furs from the French traders to the Hudson's Bay Company. He visited the French post established by De la Corne, and, pushing farther on, wintered among the Blackfeet. Hendry formed a very high opinion of the French traders, who had succeeded in obtaining a marked influence over the natives, and who had acquired several tribal languages.

After the cession of New France to England in 1763, the fur trade suffered a period of comparative inactivity on the part of the independent traders, to the corresponding advantage of the Hudson's Bay Company, to whom

the Indians were then obliged to have recourse in order to satisfy the wants and habits acquired from their intercourse with the whites. It was not for several years that mercantile adventurers again essayed to operate. There were many discouraging influences that tended to retard an early resumption of activity—the extreme length of the journey necessary to reach the confines of the territory where trading could be engaged in advantageously, the great expense attendant upon the long and tedious transportation of supplies, and the risk of attacks by hostile Indians adversely influenced against the English by the French, being predominant among them. In 1766 a resumption of the trade was attempted. Those who engaged in the venture, however, remained satisfied to go the length of the Kaministiquia River, about thirty miles eastward of La Grande Portage, where the French had established an important post at the head of Lake Superior.

Encouraged by the success of the venture, increased numbers essayed the hazard. One of these was a Thomas Curry, who was so imbued with the spirit of daring and adventure that he determined to extend his journey to the farthest limit of French penetration to the west. With guides and interpreters he set out in 1770, and in due season reached Fort Bourbon, one of the French posts, at the west end of Cedar Lake on the Saskatchewan River, and almost directly north of Lake Winnipegosis, securing so many furs that the proceeds amounted to a satisfactory competence.

James Finlay was another trader who made the Saskatchewan his field of operations. Burpee suggests that he and Curry were together, but whether they travelled in company or not they were undoubtedly among the first traders to enter that region. Finlay is said to have been on the Saskatchewan in 1767. In 1771 he ascended the river and reached Nipawee, or Fort Lacorne, the same post of De la Corne visited by the Hudson's Bay

Company officer, Hendry, in 1754-55. He, too, was successful in his operations, and returned to Montreal greatly enriched.

Governor Norton of Fort Prince of Wales, at the mouth of Churchill River on Hudson's Bay, despatched Samuel Hearne in 1769 to discover a river where copper abounded, to discover whether a north-west passage existed from Hudson's Bay to the western sea, and to establish amicable relations with the natives encountered on his explorations. Twice his expedition had to return to the fort, but the third attempt was crowned with success. Leaving Fort Prince of Wales on 7th December 1770 with sleds and dogs, Hearne set forth over the snow in the depths of a hyperborean winter on his hazardous quest, discovered Coppermine River, which he followed to its mouth, emptying into the Arctic Ocean, in June 1771, and began his return journey the following month. Before leaving the Coppermine, he erected a cairn and took possession of the country for the Company. Extending his travels to Athabasca Lake, he did not return to Fort Prince of Wales until 30th June 1772.

At this date began that intense rivalry between the Hudson's Bay Company and the independent traders that culminated in the ultimate amalgamation of the opposing interests, but not until much blood had been needlessly shed. Among those who took part in the fur trade were a number of merchants from Montreal. Two of these, Thomas and Joseph Frobisher, brothers, determined to secure for themselves some of the trade that had for years steadily flowed to the Hudson's Bay posts, by intercepting the Indians *en route*. To this end they built a trading post on Sturgeon Lake (near the former Fort Poskoiac) on the Saskatchewan River. The site was admirably suited to the purpose in view. Near it must pass all the current of traffic from the interior intended to reach Fort Prince of Wales by way of Churchill River, or by the Nelson River to York

Factory. This bold stroke of strategy did not long escape the knowledge of the Hudson's Bay Company. A counter-stroke was decided upon, and Samuel Hearne was the man selected to put it into effect. Two years after the Frobishers established their fort on Sturgeon Lake, Hearne built a rival establishment on Pine Island Lake, the western arm of Sturgeon Lake, within a few hundred yards of his competitors.

Little did these opposing interests dream what fateful events hung upon the strenuous competition thus set afoot. The struggle then begun endured for half a century, stirring the worst passions of hundreds of men, putting in motion uncontrollable powers of evil, setting men of the same race at each other's throats. But it did more than that. It drove the independent traders to seek mutual protection, in co-operating for the common interest and benefit, against a common and powerful competitor. A number of these traders pooled their interests and became more aggressive. The Frobishers, Alexander Henry, Cadot, and Pond met at Sturgeon Lake and decided upon a plan of campaign. Cadot went up the Saskatchewan, Pond proceeded to Isle à la Crosse and the Athabasca district, and the Frobishers and Henry, with a large supply of goods, hurried to Churchill River to intercept the northern Indians, and to divert their trade from the Hudson's Bay posts.

This first experiment in co-operation proved satisfactory, the outcome indicating a means whereby the independent traders might carry on their business at less expense and greater profit. There had hitherto been not only extremely keen rivalry between them, but in some instances rascality of the most depraved type was practised. Each trader strove to get the advantage of his competitors, and the means adopted too often being far from irreproachable, the effect upon the Indians was far from salutary. The traders quickly realised the benefits to be obtained from concerted

action, and out of the initial experiences was evolved that greatest of all fur-trading enterprises, the North-West Company, an organisation whose energy, initiative, and progressive policy far transcended anything attempted by the older and more conservative Hudson's Bay Company. It came into existence at Montreal in the winter of 1783-84, the management of its affairs being entrusted to Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher and Simon M'Tavish.

The North-West Company, an association of business men bonded together to carry on the fur trade, unconnected with any of the other ventures in which they might be interested individually, consisted of twenty shares divided unequally among the several partners or associates, who were divided into two classes: those who remained in Montreal and managed the business of the company and were styled agents; and proprietors, or wintering partners, who wintered among the Indians and were concerned, along with their assistants, in the actual trading for the furs. The agents provided the capital, or credit, for the purchase in England of the goods required for the business, stored them at their own expense in Montreal until they were shipped to Grande Portage, whence they were distributed to the various posts under the control of the wintering partners. The agents saw to the packing and despatch of the goods, and paid all incidental charges in that connection. Those who from long service and influence held double shares could retire from the concern whenever they pleased, retain one share and nominate some subordinate in the service to receive the other, although seniority and merit were generally given prior consideration. The subordinates, clerks, engaged for five or seven years, and their hope in life was to attain the rank of partner and participate in the profits. Only those in the service could become partners, except with the consent of the other partners. This fair-dealing with the young men

who entered the service of the company created a spirit of emulation that made for the welfare of the company and all in it, and offered a substantial reward for faithful service.

In 1768 the capital involved represented a sum of forty thousand pounds, but by 1799 it had increased to more than three times that amount, yielding handsome profits which exceeded those of any other enterprise in America.

With the exception of alcoholic liquors and provisions, all the goods obtained for this trade were purchased in England, and thus directly encouraged British industries. The money so invested did not bring any direct return for four years after the order was sent in. For example, an order sent to England from Montreal in 1796 saw the goods delivered in 1797. Repacked and forwarded by canoe, they were not in the hands of the traders in the Indian country until 1798, to be exchanged for furs that winter. The furs so obtained reached Montreal in 1799, were sent to London, where they were sold and paid for in 1800.

As affording an idea of the activities of this vigorous company of traders, in 1798 the number of furs obtained in trade included 116,000 beaver skins, 32,000 marten, 17,000 musquash, 6000 lynx, 4600 otter, 4000 kitt fox, 3800 wolf, 2700 deer, 2100 bear, and over 3000 furs of other animals. Part of these were sent through the United States to Canton, a leading fur market at that period, the others being forwarded to England. The reason given for forwarding that portion of the season's production *viâ* the United States is accounted for by Mackenzie as owing to the difficulty of getting home the produce procured in return for the furs from China in the East India Company's ships, together with duty payable, and the various restrictions of that company, whereas "from America there are no impediments; they get immediately to market, and the produce of them

is brought back, and perhaps sold in the course of twelve months. From such advantages the furs of Canada will, no doubt, find their way to China by America, which would not be the case if British subjects had the same privileges that are allowed to foreigners, as London would then be found the best and safest market."

The North-West Company employed a large number of men—120 clerks and interpreters, 1120 canoe-men, and 35 guides. Three hundred and fifty canoe-men, 5 clerks, and 18 guides were engaged during the summer in conveying goods between Montreal and Grande Portage, and to them the term Porkeaters, or Goers and Comers, was applied. Leaving Lachine in May, the fleet of canoes, heavily laden so that only six inches of freeboard showed above the water, ascended the Ottawa River, and by following an intricate course through diverse waterways, the making of several portages, reached Lake Huron. Passing the Island of St Joseph and the Sault Ste. Marie, Lake Superior was entered, and near the head of the lake, on a pleasant bay, they arrived at their destination, Grande Portage, where stood the establishment or fort of the company. "The bottom of the bay," writes Mackenzie, "which forms an amphitheatre, is cleared of wood and inclosed, and on the left corner of it, beneath an hill three or four hundred feet in height, and crowned by others of a still greater altitude, is the fort, picketed in with cedar palisadoes, and inclosing houses built with wood and covered with shingles. They are calculated for every convenience of trade, as well as to accommodate the proprietors and clerks during their short residence there." Few traces of the fort now remain.

The portage itself, a fairly well-made road, wide enough for the passage of sleighs drawn by horses or oxen in the winter season when the soft marshy ground was frozen hard, was some ten miles in length to avoid the falls on Pigeon River. At other seasons the packages of goods had to be carried over the portage by the men.

From the west and north came the "Northmen," clerks, traders, and canoe-men, with furs from the distant posts. The men upon arrival were regaled with food and drink and tobacco. In 1783 five hundred men might be found there at one time. A decade later sometimes as many as twelve hundred would be assembled there, and as drinking was a habit indulged in by many of them, and usually attended with much singing and dancing and occasionally fighting, the fort presented a lively scene.

"The mode of living at the Grande Portage is as follows," says Mackenzie. "The proprietors, clerks, guides, and interpreters mess together to the number sometimes of an hundred, at several tables in one large hall, the provision consisting of bread, salt pork, beef, hams, fish and venison, butter peas, Indian corn, potatoes, tea, spirits, wine, &c., and plenty of milk, for which purpose several milch cows were constantly kept. The mechanics have rations of such provision, but the canoe-men, both from the North and from Montreal, have no other allowance here or on the voyage than Indian corn and melted fat." The latter preparation was hominy boiled, and to which melted fat was added, the dish resembling a thick pudding.

At a later date, when the North-West Company moved their great distributing centre to Kaministiquia, naming it Fort William (after William M'Gillivray, one of the principal shareholders or partners), a considerable village grew up alongside the post. There, as at Grande Portage, the annual meeting of partners was held, the wintering partners coming in from the outlying districts, as far away as Fort Chipewyan, and two or three of the "agents" journeying from Montreal, with all its comforts, for the purpose. The business of the past year was discussed, and plans laid for the coming season. "Here, in an immense wooden building, was the great council hall, as also the banqueting chamber, decorated with Indian

arms and accoutrements and the trophies of the fur trade," says Washington Irving in 'Astoria.' "The house swarmed at this time with traders and voyageurs, some from Montreal bound to the interior posts, some from the interior posts bound to Montreal. The councils were held in great state, for every member felt as if sitting in parliament, and every retainer and dependant looked up to the assemblage with awe, as to the house of lords. There was a vast deal of solemn deliberation and hard Scottish reasoning, with an occasional swell of pompous declamation.

"These grave and weighty councils were alternated by huge feasts and revels, like some of the feasts described in Highland castles. The tables in the great banqueting-room groaned under the weight of game of all kinds; of venison from the woods, and fish from the lakes, with hunters' delicacies such as buffaloes' tongues and beavers' tails; and various luxuries from Montreal, all served up by experienced cooks brought for the purpose. There was no stint of generous wine, for it was a hard-drinking period, a time of loyal toasts, of bacchanalian songs, and brimming bumpers.

"While the chiefs thus revelled in hall, and made the rafters resound with bursts of loyalty and old Scottish songs, chanted in voices cracked and sharpened by the northern blast, their merriment was echoed and prolonged by a mongrel legion of retainers, Canadian voyageurs, half-breeds, Indian hunters, and vagabond hangers-on, who feasted sumptuously without on the crumbs that fell from their tables, and made the welkin ring with old French ditties, mingled with Indian yelps and yellings.

"Such was the North-West Company in its powerful and prosperous days, when it held a kind of feudal sway over a vast domain of lake and forest."

Of lesser literary fame another writer, one of the clerks and traders of the company, Ross Cox, gives a no less

spirited, if not so flamboyant, picture of Fort William as it was in his day. "Fort William may therefore be looked upon as the metropolitan post of the interior, and its fashionable season generally continues from the end of May to the latter end of August. During this period good living and festivity predominate, and the luxuries of the dinner-table compensate in some degree for the long fasts and short commons experienced by those who are stationed in the remote posts. The voyageurs too enjoy their carnival, and between rum and baubles the hard-earned wages of years are often dissipated in a few weeks.

"The dining-hall is a noble apartment, and sufficiently capacious to entertain two hundred. A finely executed bust of the late Simon M'Tavish is placed in it, with portraits of various proprietors. A full-length likeness of Nelson, together with a splendid painting of the battle of the Nile, also decorated the walls, and were presented by the Honourable William M'Gillivray to the Company. At the upper end of the hall there is a very large map of the Indian country, drawn with great accuracy by Mr David Thompson, astronomer to the company, and comprising all their trading posts from Hudson's Bay to Athabasca and Great Slave Lake.

"The buildings at Fort William consist of a large house in which the dining-hall is situated, and in which the gentleman in charge resides; the council house; a range of snug buildings for the Doctor's residence; extensive stores for the merchandise and furs; a forge; various workshops, with apartments for the mechanics, a number of whom are always stationed here. There is also a prison for refractory voyageurs. The whole is surrounded by wooden fortifications, flanked by bastions, and is sufficiently strong to withstand any attack from the natives. Outside the fort is a shipyard, in which the Company's vessels on the lake are built and repaired. The kitchen-garden is well stocked,

and there are extensive fields of Indian corn and potatoes. There are also several head of cattle, with sheep, hogs, poultry, &c., and a few horses for domestic use."

Such, then, constituted the headquarters of the great company of Canadian fur-traders, and such the nature of their organisation, beginning first with the Grande Portage establishment, which possessed all the features of that subsequently built at Kaministiquia, and in its most prosperous days the scene of many stirring incidents. It is essential to describe at some length these particulars concerning this Company and its affairs, because with them Alexander Mackenzie had a great deal to do, and without having some knowledge of the vast resources of the North-West Company, and of its almost perfect organisation that enabled its business to proceed with clockwork precision, it would be impossible to comprehend the vastness of the task that confronted him when he came to enter into direct competition with it.

CHAPTER II.

THE ADVENT OF ALEXANDER MACKENZIE.

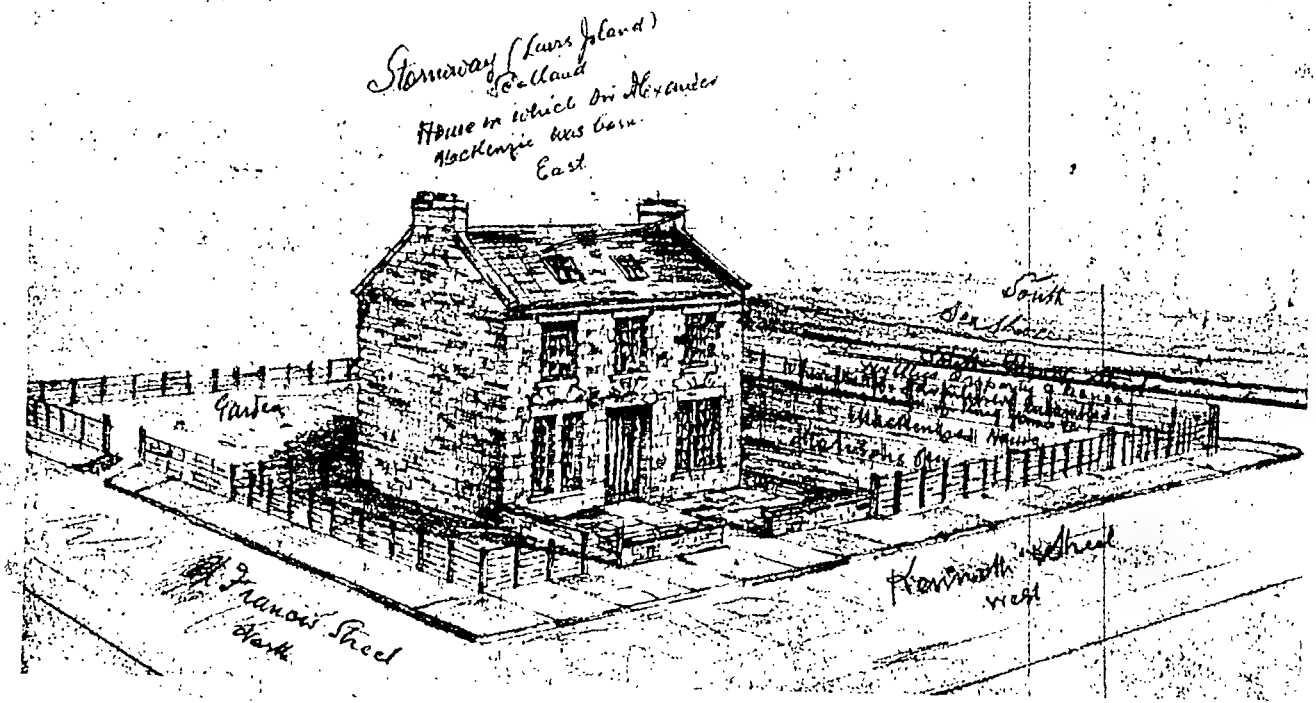
AMONG the enterprising and prosperous firms of merchants of Montreal at the time of the organisation of the North-West Company was that of Gregory, M'Leod & Co., the partners being John Gregory, an Englishman, and Alexander Norman M'Leod, a Scotsman. When the North-West Company was formed, two traders from the American Colonies who had penetrated into the western plains, Peter Pond and Peter Pangman, and who felt aggrieved because they had not been taken into the combine, proceeded to Montreal with the object of interesting some merchants there in entering the fur trade in competition with that concern. They succeeded in enlisting the active interest of Gregory, M'Leod & Co. In the counting-house of that firm a young Scotsman named Alexander Mackenzie had been working for several years. Little did either the members of the firm, his employers, or the two disgruntled traders, Pond and Pangman, dream that the quiet, well-behaved, industrious, youthful clerk was destined to be the leading spirit in the fur trade centring in Montreal; still less did they foresee that he was to become a great explorer, the man who would first trace the great northern river that bears his name to where it debouches into the Arctic Ocean, who would first cross the continent north of Mexico to the waters of the western sea, the Pacific.

Alexander Mackenzie was a descendant of the Mackenzies of Seaforth—

> "MacKenneth, great Earl of the North,
> The Lord of Loch Garron, Glenshiel, and Seaforth,"—

ancestors of the Mackenzies of Logis, Hilton, and Gairloch, to whom the Island of Lewis, of which Stornoway is the capital, at one time belonged. It was at Stornoway that Alexander Mackenzie was born in 1764, according to a written family record still extant. Rev. George Bryce states that Mackenzie's grandson informed him that his grandfather was born in 1763, but a year later is the date now accepted by his descendants. Chambers's Eminent Scotsmen (vol. iii.) and the Dictionary of National Biography both commit the same error in giving the date of his birth as 1755. It is possible that this mistake may be due to mistaken identity, for there was another Alexander Mackenzie in Canada at that time, and, strange to say, he too hailed from Stornoway, where his brother Colin was Comptroller of Customs; a third brother, Kenneth, was also in Canada. To make confusion more confounded it has been stated that Colin Mackenzie was the brother of Sir Alexander, but this is obviously incorrect; Sir Alexander had only one brother, whose name was Murdoch. I have before me a letter written by the pseudo Alexander Mackenzie to his brother Colin at Stornoway. It is dated "Canada, 6th June 1778," and is endorsed "Recd. 6 Septbr. 1778," and contains the following passage: "Tell our father I'll write him next fleet." If this means anything at all it would indicate that their father was then at or near Stornoway, whereas at that date Kenneth Mackenzie, Sir Alexander's father, was in Canada, a lieutenant in the Royal Forces. These facts prove conclusively that Alexander, Colin's brother, and Alexander, Kenneth's son, were two entirely different persons.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie's father, Kenneth Mackenzie



Luskentyre House, Stornoway, Birthplace of Sir Alexander Mackenzie.



of Melbost, was the son of Donald Mackenzie of Fairburn, whose father was Allan Mackenzie of Stornoway. Kenneth of Melbost, who is said to have been a very powerful man and bore the nickname of "Cork," was an ensign in the Stornoway Company raised by President Forbes to oppose the rising of 1745. He married Isabella Maciver, a member of one of Stornoway's leading families, whose brother John Maciver, known by the sobriquet of "Ready Money John" because of his habit of paying cash for everything, was a well-to-do merchant in New York. Kenneth and his wife resided at Melbost farmhouse, two miles distant from the town of Stornoway. Four children were the fruit of this union, two sons, Murdoch and Alexander, and two daughters, Sybilla and Margaret. The elder son studied medicine, and, as was a common practice at that period, went a voyage as ship surgeon, probably on board a whaler, and was lost at sea.

There are various versions of the story of Kenneth Mackenzie and his family, but that which I believe to be the true account is derived from the direct descendants and associates of the Mackenzie family as set forth in written family records. According to this account Kenneth's wife died at Stornoway, and her husband, with their son Alexander and the latter's two aunts, the Misses M'Iver, sisters of Alexander's mother, emigrated to New York, the place of residence of John M'Iver, Alexander's uncle, and brother of the two ladies who were of the party, in 1774. Alexander was then ten years of age.

Alexander's two sisters, Sybilla and Margaret, were to have accompanied them on the voyage, but had not gone aboard the ship with the others, the vessel being delayed by unfavourable winds, and were left behind when, taking advantage of a change in the wind, the captain suddenly set sail.

The following spring, 1775, began the war of American

Independence, and Kenneth Mackenzie and his brother-in-law John M'Iver, or Maciver as it is spelled in some of the family records, joined the King's Forces, entering the Royal Yorks as lieutenants under the command of Sir John Johnson,[1] the boy Alexander being left in charge of his two aunts, who left New York and moved up to old Johnstown,[2] which is said to have been commonly known by the name of Sir John's Bush, which is probably the hamlet near Johnstown called Scotch Bush. The two ladies took the boy with them, and there he remained until 1778, when, feeling uneasy for his safety in the heart of a rebellious country, his aunts sent him into Canada in charge of Colonel M'Donell's mother, who took him to Montreal, where he was sent to school. Lieutenant Kenneth Mackenzie, Alexander's father, remained in the royalist army until his death, which occurred in 1780 at Carleton Island, near Kingston, south of Wolfe Island, in Lake Ontario, and which now belongs

[1] Sir John Johnson (1742-1830) was the son of Sir William Johnson who, born in Ireland in 1715, went to America in 1738 to take charge of the estates of his uncle, Sir Peter Warren. For his services against the French and the defeat of Dieskau at Lake George, he received the thanks of Parliament, a vote of £5000, and a baronetcy. He died in 1774, and in that same year his son, Sir John Johnson, was appointed major-general of militia. He raised and commanded the "King's Royal Regiment of New York" (and it was in this body that Kenneth Mackenzie and John M'Iver served) to fight against the Revolutionists. His possessions being confiscated by the rebels, he laid waste all that region, burning villages and farmhouses in retaliation. He fled to Canada in 1776, and served under St Leger against Arnold the following year. In May 1780, Sir John, at the head of 500 British regulars, his own Loyalist troops, the Royal Greens, and about 200 Indians and Tories, raided Johnstown, an object being to recover family plate concealed at Johnson Hall.

[2] Johnstown, located in the Mohawk Valley, Fulton County, New York State, witnessed during the Revolution the invasion by the British under St Leger, the battle of Oriskany, Sullivan's Indian expedition, and frequent depredations by Loyalist troops and Indians under Sir John Johnson and other leaders. The town was founded by Sir William Johnson, who induced settlers to locate there, and who built Johnson Hall there.

to the United States. In 1779, the year before the death of his father, Alexander entered the service of Gregory, M'Leod & Co.; he was then fifteen years of age.

Another version of the migration to New York is given by the late John N. Anderson, at one time provost of Stornoway, who took a keen interest in the life-story of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. He states in a letter he wrote to one of the Mackenzie clan, and which has been handed to me and now lies on my desk, that he obtained his information from a descendant of one of the explorer's sisters, but unfortunately he is so careless in his statements that they cannot be always accepted at par; in all probability he misconstrued or misunderstood the information given him. As an instance of the looseness of his statements, it may be pointed out that he refers to Sir Alexander as being "the first white man to cross the Rocky Mountains and reach the Island of Vancouver in British Columbia." It is common knowledge that Sir Alexander Mackenzie not only did not reach Vancouver Island but he never saw it, not even from a distance! The account given by Mr Anderson of Alexander's advent in the United States is that, John M'Iver having invited Kenneth Mackenzie, his brother-in-law, to visit him in New York, it was arranged that he was to be accompanied by his wife and two daughters and the boy Alexander. "He (Kenneth) and his son went on board the emigrant ship at night with their belongings, and the ladies were to follow next morning, but a terrible storm having sprung up during the night the captain, fearing his ship would drive ashore, took up anchor and drove out to sea. The storm continuing, the captain was unable to make the harbour of Stornoway again, and the ship continued on her way to America. Kenneth Mackenzie, however, got a promise from the captain that on his next voyage from Stornoway he would bring out Mrs Mackenzie and her daughters. Whatever was the reason, Mrs Mackenzie and her daughters did not go to

America, but remained in Stornoway for a considerable time thereafter; in fact, Sir Alexander Mackenzie on his return to Stornoway found his mother still living, and there is a pretty story of how he *reverenced* her when he met her in Stornoway."

How much of this pleasant and entertaining story is based upon village and countryside gossip is open to conjecture, but the fact that Mr Anderson made so many errors, notwithstanding his apparent interest in the subject, throws a grave doubt over his alleged facts. In support of this criticism it may be pointed out that he says that Sir Alexander's sister Sybilla married a Mr Dowie, and the other sister, Margaret, became the wife of John Kirkland, and that Sir Alexander died "about 1819" while on his way north, while it is beyond question that Sybilla married Kirkland, Margaret wedded Captain Dowie, and Mackenzie died in 1820. Not only did Sir Alexander not see his mother at Stornoway or anywhere else after his return from Canada, but the family records show that she died before he first left Scotland!

In his younger days at Stornoway he had received the benefit of the educational facilities available there at that period. Reared in an invigorating climate, inured almost from the cradle to the chill blasts of raw winds, the salt spray of the sea, his muscles toughened by tugging at the oars of fishing boats, having as companions on such occasions the sturdy rugged sons of sturdy rugged fishermen and sailors, Alexander was no sickly, white-faced, anæmic, city-bred lad when he sailed away from the port of Stornoway for the New World.

For years the Hudson's Bay Company had recruited the ranks of their employees from Scotland, and many of their ships bound for the trading posts on the shores of Hudson's Bay had as a chief point of departure the seaport of Stornoway on the Island of Lewis. The imagination of youth is easily kindled, and more especially

is this the case with those natures in whom dwells the spirit of romance and adventure, and such an one was young Mackenzie. The unknown beckoned him. It held out the promise of everything dear to the susceptible mind of vigorous youth—adventure, opportunity to acquire wealth and honours. The boy Alexander had seen other lads sail for the West to enter the service of the company of adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, and who can say his ambition was not fired?

When he entered the counting-house of the Montreal firm of merchants and traders, Alexander Mackenzie was not slow to discern the advantages he enjoyed in that service as compared with that of the great Company, where he would have been trammelled and bound by the rigid rules that governed its employees.

For five years he worked in the office of Gregory, M'Leod & Co., acquiring a knowledge of the business in all its branches, absorbing the tales of the *coureurs de bois* and of the gay vivacious voyageurs, whose avocations brought them in direct contact with the fur-traders and merchants. He learned of the customs of the country, of the Indians, of the hunters, and of the trappers, thus preparing himself for a more active participation in the stirring life of a trader. So well did he perform his duties, so great was his zeal, so indefatigable was he in all that pertained to the business of the firm, that his principals entrusted him with a small venture in goods with which he proceeded to Detroit, not an easy journey in those days. There were no roads through the dense forest with which Ontario was then covered, but there was the River St Lawrence, and beyond that lay the great lake, over whose surface canoes laden with men and merchandise might travel. Traversing the intervening country on foot from Lake Ontario, Lake Erie was reached and its shores followed to Detroit, once a favourite rendezvous for traders. Mackenzie soon established

friendly relations with the Indians in the back country, and prosecuted his business with characteristic energy and address, diplomatically overcoming the resentment of a party of European traders already established in that region. While he was engaged in this traffic his former employer, Mr Gregory, arranged that he should be admitted a partner in the independent enterprise in which he and Mr M'Leod were associated. This graceful acknowledgement of Mackenzie's worth and integrity was made by Mr Gregory without any solicitation. In such high esteem did Mr Gregory hold his quondam clerk that, not content with having performed this voluntary service, he despatched his partner, M'Leod, to Detroit to advise Mackenzie of it. Needless to say, the young trader accepted with alacrity the golden opportunity, and he at once agreed to the condition attached to the proposal that he should go to the Indian country, sometimes vaguely spoken of as the Saskatchewan country, the following spring, 1785. This being all settled, Mackenzie, now enjoying the rank of a bourgeois, set out for Grande Portage, where he joined his associates.

While Alexander Mackenzie was engaged at Detroit in his first independent trading venture, there arrived in Canada from Scotland, in September 1784, his cousin, Roderick Mackenzie, with letters of introduction to Peter Stuart of Quebec. Roderick presented the credentials, and consulted with Stuart as to the best course for him to adopt with a view to his material advantage. Mr Stuart advised him to enter the fur trade. In accordance with this advice Roderick Mackenzie proceeded to Montreal and succeeded in finding employment with Gregory, M'Leod & Company. In June 1785 he began his career as a trader, embarking at St Ann for the north-west under a three years' engagement. The brigade—a term applied to the flotilla of canoes employed in making these voyages—was under the guidance and in charge of one La Londe, a middle-aged guide well known to

voyageurs. The usual route was up the Ottawa River—portaging at the Carillon Rapids, Long Sault, and Chute au Blondeau—to the Chaudière, and thence by the west branch of the Ottawa to its headwaters, making the Vaz portages to a small stream that conducted them to Lake Nipissing, thence down French River to Georgian Bay, and up the St Mary's River into Lake Superior.

At Long Sault on the Ottawa, the brigade was joined by Mr Gregory, the senior partner, Duncan Pollock, recently engaged in the fur trade among the Michilimackinac Indians, and James Finlay, jun., Gregory's brother-in-law and son of the old trader, James Finlay, who had long before adventured as far as the Saskatchewan River. Young Finlay was of the same age as Roderick Mackenzie, and on the same footing in the service. When they arrived at Thessalon on Lake Huron, near the mouth of St Mary's River, Gregory and Finlay separated from the main party and went to Michilimackinac, leaving Duncan Pollock in command. Soon afterwards they were met by Peter (Bastonnais) Pangman, and a few days later they were joined by Mr Gregory, James Finlay, and Alexander Mackenzie.

All the members of the new concern assembled at their headquarters at the Grande Portage, with the exception of Mr M'Leod, whose duty was to manage the affairs at Montreal. Those gathered together at Grande Portage were John Gregory, Peter Pangman, John Ross, and Alexander Mackenzie, partners; Duncan Pollock and Laurent Leroux, clerks; and Roderick Mackenzie and James Finlay, apprentice clerks. Peter Pond, he who had been so keen in urging Gregory, M'Leod & Company to compete with the Frobisher and M'Tavish interests, had soon deserted them and gone back to his former associates. At the conference that ensued it was decided that John Ross should proceed to Athabasca, Alexander Mackenzie to English River (Churchill River), Pangman to Fort des Prairies (the Saskatchewan district),

and Duncan Pollock to Red River. These assignments made, the several parties departed for their respective posts, leaving the establishment at Grande Portage in charge of the veteran Pierre L'Anniau. Roderick Mackenzie also remained at the same place, together with eighteen voyageurs, to erect buildings and make other necessary preparations for the prosecution of their enterprise. That winter Roderick superseded L'Anniau, and in the summer of 1786 he accompanied Alexander Mackenzie to English River, and was placed in charge of the post at Lac des Serpents. To that same locality came William M'Gillivray in the interests of the North-West Company. Side by side stood the posts of the two rival concerns. The competition was keen, each striving to acquire the greater number of furs, but always they maintained the most friendly personal relations. In the spring of 1787, when they set out for their respective headquarters at the Grande Portage, they travelled in company, the rival crews singing their chansons in chorus.

So keen was the competition between the North-West Company and the Gregory-M'Leod concern that the rivalry of the Hudson's Bay Company was, for the time, completely overlooked. At the head of the North-Westers were men determined to brook no opposition they could possibly overcome or prevent, and their competitors soon discovered that every obstacle that their more experienced opponents could place in their way was made use of to incommode and annoy them. Vigorous as was the younger and smaller company, it was no match for the older and more powerful organisation. (Note A.) Neither benefited by the bitter rivalry, and the wiser heads soon decided that the saner course to pursue was to sink their differences and combine their forces. Fortunately these wiser counsels ultimately prevailed, but not until financial losses and bloodshed had left their mark.

It has been stated above that John Ross was despatched to the Athabasca country in the interest of the young company. Thither the deserter, Peter Pond, had also been sent by his old associates, the North-West Company. Pond did not enjoy a very savoury reputation. He was unscrupulous, overbearing, and had been accused of the murder of a Mr Wadin, a rival trader, some years before. He had been tried at Montreal for the crime, but his guilt had not been proved and he had been set at liberty. John Ross found his competitor far from sharing the feeling of good-fellowship displayed by M'Gillivray and some others of the North-West Company. On the contrary, Pond's conduct was such as to give rise to frequent quarrels between the traders. In one of these disputes Ross was shot and killed. This act served to bring the competing organisations to their senses, and their union was effected in July 1787. The news of the murder was conveyed to Grande Portage by Roderick Mackenzie, who was at Isle à la Crosse at the time. In a light canoe manned by five voyageurs he hastened to headquarters with the disturbing intelligence, accomplishing the journey in a month of hard travelling.

The situation in the Athabasca required the attention of a firm hand, a resolute tactful mind. The partners of the North-West Company cast about for the man possessing the necessary qualifications, and they settled upon Alexander Mackenzie, then only twenty-four years of age. Young as he was he had proven himself to be a man of mettle, determined, daring, resourceful, inured to hardship, and a successful trader. What he had done at Detroit, and what he had accomplished as a bourgeois in the Gregory-M'Leod organisation, showed his capabilities. To him, then, the North-West Company, just reorganised on a broader basis, turned to handle affairs in the far-off district that Peter Pond had ruled to such unfortunate purpose.

The route followed by Mackenzie was by a series of

portages to Rainy Lake, and thence to Lake of the Woods. A short portage at Rat Portage, from the lake to Winnipeg River, gave access to Winnipeg Lake, into which flow the Red River of the North from the south and the Saskatchewan from the west, and out of which flows the Nelson River into Hudson's Bay. It was up Lake Winnipeg to the Churchill River that Mackenzie had journeyed to his first assignment. Now he was to ascend the great Saskatchewan to follow in the footsteps of Finlay, Pond, and the others who had gained the interior by its means. Soon after entering that river the great rapids, three miles long, were encountered, necessitating a portage of nearly a mile. Two miles above another and shorter portage, that of the Roche Rouge, had to be made, and after passing still more rapids Cedar Lake was reached, on which was the old French post of Fort Bourbon. Passing Cumberland House on Sturgeon Lake, the lake itself was entered and traversed, whence the route ran northerly to Beaver Lake, Heron Lake, &c., and by Frog Portage to the Churchill River. Turning westerly the course ran through Otter Lake, Black Bear Island Lake, Mouse Lake, Knee Lake, Lake of Isle à la Crosse, Lake Clear, Buffalo Lake, and so on to the Clearwater River which empties into the Athabasca River, on whose banks stood the post which was to be his headquarters for the district placed under his control.

Alexander Mackenzie reached Athabasca Fort on 21st October 1787. It had been established by Pond in 1778, who, after the formation of the original North-West Company, had sent a clerk, Laurent Le Roux, to Great Slave Lake to open trade with the Indians there, the post being named Fort Resolution. Subsequently another post was established on the Little Lake and named Fort Providence. While on his way to the posts on Great Slave Lake, Cuthbert Grant lost five men, two canoes, and several packages of goods in the autumn of 1786 in the rapids at Portage des Noyes, on the Slave River below

what is now called Smith's Landing. One of Mackenzie's first acts was to close the posts on Great Slave Lake, then the most northerly of the company's outposts. While at Fort Athabasca the young trader familiarised himself thoroughly with the conditions of the trade in that district, and determined upon making some radical changes. Before carrying his plans into execution, however, he paid a visit to Rainy Lake in July 1788, and succeeded in having Roderick Mackenzie, then stationed at English River, transferred to his own district. Already Alexander Mackenzie was fired with ambition. He had learned of the existence of a great river running northward out of Great Slave Lake, and he longed to discover into what ocean it emptied its waters. Did it flow into the frozen sea, the Arctic Ocean, or did its course run in such a direction as to cause its current to flow into the western sea, the Pacific? Samuel Hearne had discovered a large river, the Coppermine, which debouched into the Arctic, and Hearne was a fur-trader even as he. What Hearne had done he felt that he could do, and he wanted opportunity to make the venture. To do this he felt he must have a trustworthy lieutenant to leave in charge of his post during his absence, and where could he find a more reliable man than his own cousin, Roderick? Self-interest and the ties of blood would, in themselves, ensure faithful service, but besides those influences was the integrity of the man whose honourable disposition was a yet more powerful factor in justifying the confidence of his chief than the mere fact of kinship would guarantee.

Pond had built the Athabasca Fort on the Elk, or Athabasca River, about forty miles from its mouth in the Lake of the Hills, Lake Athabasca. Alexander Mackenzie was not satisfied with its situation, and now that he had his kinsman with him he carried into effect the changes he had already determined upon. He sent Roderick down to the Lake of the Hills to select a site and erect thereupon a new fort. Until 1785 Pond's fort

was the only trading post in that territory, at which date the posts on Great Slave Lake were established. Mackenzie wiped out all that Pond had done. He began his rule of the extensive domain committed to his charge by starting with a clean slate, as it were. By this centralisation of his post he hoped to meet the trading requirements of the Indians. The new location was not too far removed from the old fort to incommode those Indians accustomed to trade there, and it brought appreciably nearer those other tribes dwelling north of the lake. It had the additional advantage of being close to a winter supply of food—that is to say, the fish to be obtained from the lake itself. The new post was named Fort Chipewyan, and, says Mackenzie in his 'Voyages,' stood "on a point on its (Lake Athabasca) southern side, at about eight miles from the discharge of the river." The post was an important one. From it expeditions were sent in all directions in search of trade. The men under his command numbered from ninety to one hundred souls, and to keep them supplied with food was no easy task. Herein lay much of the wisdom that prompted the removal of the headquarters of the district to the lake. Every day the sixty fathom nets were set so that the supply might ever be plentiful, for upon fish the men sustained life almost entirely, the amount of flesh meat obtained being altogether inadequate.

Alexander Mackenzie left the old fort for Fort Chipewyan shortly before Christmas 1788, and remained there until February 1789. During that period it may be readily imagined what formed the chief subject of conversation between the cousins, the chief and his trusty aide. The thoughts of Alexander ran upon the exploration of the unknown river. The germ that inspires men to face the untrodden places of the earth had found a favourable medium in him for its development, and his brain was busy with plans for the carrying out of his purpose, for he had fully determined in his own mind

that nothing short of death would deter him from making the voyage. He had men and materials at his disposal. He would leave the affairs of the company in the capable hands of Roderick, while he himself would, in the course of his explorations, not omit to further the objects of the North-West Company with respect to the prosecution of the trade.

CHAPTER III.

THE EXPLORATION OF THE MACKENZIE RIVER.

AT nine o'clock on the morning of July 14th, 1789, while the Parisians, vociferating the cry "to the Bastille," were hastening, frenzied with conflicting passions and emotions, to batter down the gates of that hated fortress and raze its walls to the ground, Alexander Mackenzie gazed upon a far different scene—a school of whales disporting in the waters of the Arctic Ocean, for he had achieved an objective he had determined upon, the exploration of the great river of the north.

From west of the Rocky Mountains, carried in the first instance by the natives, there had come to the ears of the fur-traders rumours of a land beyond that opposing barrier, a land of promise; not flowing with milk and honey perhaps, but rich in beaver and other fur-bearing animals. Other reports had also reached them from England of the maritime fur-traders, of the voyages of Captain James Cook and other explorers by sea. Their interest was excited and their appetite for adventure whetted by these rumours and reports. A few of the fur-traders were endowed with rather a passion for adventure and exploration than the more prosaic bartering for furs, and more than one of them longed to penetrate that frowning rampart of snowclad peaks, to see for themselves what lay at the other side—a wild virgin country they were told, of forests of vast extent, of rugged mountain ranges, of rapid tempestuous streams, of smiling valleys,

peopled by natives of strange language and treacherous disposition.

There was, however, something more than the desire to explore and exploit a virgin field. Always there was lurking at the back of it a yearning to search for that great western sea that lay in the indefinite somewhere beyond those frowning heaven-piercing fastnesses. Alexander Mackenzie felt that yearning, and was the first of the Nor'-Westers to give rein to it. He knew that a mighty river flowed out of Athabasca Lake and emptied into Great Slave Lake—the North-Westers Grant and Laurent Le Roux had built winter quarters there in 1786,—and out of Great Slave Lake an unknown river ran through unexplored country. Perhaps it might lead to the western sea; who could tell? At any rate, Mackenzie decided to explore it, to descend it and ascertain what lay at the distant end of it. (Note B.)

Until Alexander Mackenzie lifted the veil that had hitherto concealed from the eyes and knowledge of civilised man the mysteries of the unknown country that lay to the west and north of the trading posts of Athabasca (afterwards renamed Fort Chipewyan when removed to the Lake of the Hills), Fort Resolution, and Fort Providence, no attempt worthy of note had been made by either Pond, Le Roux, or Cuthbert Grant to explore those rivers, or the lands they drained. Those traders had rested content with what imperfect information they could glean from the Indians who came to trade with them, or from others whom they casually encountered in the course of the peregrinations about the country under their jurisdiction. Not so Mackenzie. He did not rest content with the meagre details ascertained in such haphazard fashion, and having determined to see for himself first what the great river of the north might reveal, he prepared for a voyage of discovery.

The preparations Mackenzie considered necessary for such an undertaking were of the simplest kind. No

elaborate equipment was laboriously collected and more laboriously conveyed along the route of march or voyage, to hamper their movements and impede their progress. A good gun for every man, an abundant supply of powder and ball,—those were the days of muzzle-loaders and flint-locks,—a limited quantity of provisions—the gun and fishing-line or net must be the main reliance for adequate sustenance,—some merchandise and trinkets for presents wherewith to gain the goodwill of natives met *en route*, and blankets for each man, sufficed for the longest journey. Some of the traders—Mackenzie was one of these—carried with them a small supply of spirits; others, David Thompson for example, would have none of it, and proved that trading and travelling, even under the most arduous conditions, could be done as well, if not better, without it. Such, then, was the nature of the preparations for a voyage of exploration into an unknown region for an unknown period and an unknown distance.

Now that he was about to engage in this venture, and having secured full control of the situation respecting carrying on the business of the North-West Company in his district, he decided to abandon his first policy of retrenchment and to embark upon a new, or more correctly perhaps a return to the former, line of action. The trading post on Great Slave Lake was to be reopened again under Le Roux, and a new post established on the river that flowed from the west—Peace River—into Slave River. Doubtless Mackenzie was not unmindful of the advantage that would accrue from having an outpost on the Peace River when the time came for him to turn his attention to western exploration, for there can be no question that he had already made up his mind to break through the Rocky Mountains at the first opportunity. To the Peace River, therefore, in 1788 he sent one Boyer, who established a post, some authorities say, at the junction of Little Red River with the Peace,

while others place it higher up above Loon River. Mackenzie coached his cousin Roderick in the management of affairs during his absence, and with a heart full of hope and resolution set out on his great adventure.

In his narrative of the descent of the Mackenzie River, for so the mighty waterway was named in honour of him who first reached its mouth, the explorer relates in simple language a tale worthy of more elaborate setting. The story begins with the sentence: "June 1789, Wednesday, 3.—We embarked at nine in the morning at Fort Chepewyan, on the South side of the Lake of the Hills, in latitude 58.40 North, and in longitude 110.30 West from Greenwich, and compass has sixteen degrees variation East, in a canoe made of birch bark." In that canoe, besides Mackenzie, were four Canadians—two having their wives with them—and a German. The Canadians were François Barrieau, Charles Ducette, Joseph Landry, and Pierre De Lorme; the German was a young man named John Steinbruick. In a second canoe, in charge of Le Roux, were bestowed the bulk of their supplies, together with goods for trading and presents; and in still another canoe an Indian known as English Chief, his two wives, and some followers. English Chief derived his name from the fact, states Mackenzie, that he had been a "principal leader of his countrymen who were in the habit of carrying furs to Churchill Factory, Hudson's Bay, and till of late very much attached to the interest of that company."

The canoes used by the fur-traders were made of birch bark and were manned by voyageurs, a hardy class inured from youth to the use of the paddle. Many of them were French-Iroquois half-bloods, others were of unadulterated French parentage. Colonel Landmann, who travelled by canoe from Lachine to St Joseph with William M'Gillivray in 1798, describes the canoes as of two main types: a larger sort employed on the rivers and lakes east of Grande Portage, and a smaller type used west of that

place. Of the first kind, Landmann says: "These canoes were exceedingly strong and capacious. They were about thirty-six feet in length by six feet wide near the middle, and although the birch bark which formed a thin external coating over their ribs of white cedar, and their longitudinal laths of the same wood, appeared to compose but a flimsy vessel, yet they usually carried a weight of five tons. It may be well to state that this cargo was very carefully stored in order to remove any unequal pressure, which would have been fatal to such vessel. Four poles, three or four inches at their thickest ends, denominated by the Canadian *grand-perch*, were laid side by side in the middle of the bottom of the canoe. On these poles the cargo was carefully arranged so that all the weight rested on them, and none allowed to press against the bare and unprotected sides of the canoe. Every package was made up of the weight of ninety pounds, and none heavier. The five tons included the provision for ten men, sufficient to support them during about twenty to twenty-two days. Each canoe was provided with a mast and lug-sail, and also each man had a ten-foot pole of good ash, shod with an iron ferrule at each end, for assisting the men towing with a long line in ascending the rapids. The paddles were supplied by the canoe-men, each bringing his own. Each canoe had also a camp-kettle provided by the owners, as also a few Hambro lines, a bundle of watep, roots of the pine-tree, for stitching any seam that might burst, a parcel of gum of a resinous nature for paying over the seams when leaky, a piece of birch bark for repairs, hatchet, crooked knife, and a few more indispensable articles." The north canoes, as those used on the waters west of Grande Portage were called, were about half the size of the Ottawa River route canoes, with a capacity of a ton and a half and carrying four or five men.

Of the voyageurs the same authority says: "No men

in the world are more severely worked than are these Canadian voyageurs. I have known them to work in a canoe twenty hours out of twenty-four, and go at that rate during a fortnight or three weeks without a day of rest or a diminution of labour; but it is not with impunity they so exert themselves; they lose much flesh in the performance of such journeys, though the amount of food they consume is incredible. They smoke almost incessantly, and sing peculiar songs, which are the same their fathers and grandfathers and probably their great-grandfathers sang before them; the time is about the same as that of our military quick marches, and is marked by the movement of their paddles. They rest from five to ten minutes every two hours, when they refill their pipes; it is more common for them to describe distances by so many pipes, than in any other way."

The foreman, or "le maître," had his place in the bow, and as soon as the last piece of cargo had been bestowed, the crew at their posts, and the passengers embarked, he gave the word to start, the paddles plunged into the water, and the men burst into song as they began their voyage. A prime favourite of these chansons de voyage was the lively En Roulant, the story of "Three Fairy Ducks"—

"Derriere chez nous, il y a un étang,
En roulant ma boule.
Trois beaux canards s'en vont baignant,
En roulant ma boule.
Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant,
En roulant, ma boule roulant,
En roulant, ma boule."

Verse after verse is lustily sung, all hands joining in the chorus and swinging their paddles vigorously in perfect rhythm. Or the leader might, perchance, prefer the

greatest favourite of all, "A la Claire Fontaine," with its plaintive chorus—

"Long is it I have loved thee,
Thee shall I love alway,
My dearest;
Long is it I have loved thee,
Thee shall I love alway."

Simple-minded fellows were these muscular, hard-drinking, hard-working voyageurs, superstitious, volatile, laughter-loving; inclined to grumble and growl when things went amiss, but amenable to discipline when properly approached. Mackenzie had the happy faculty of knowing, apparently intuitively, how to handle them, and had frequent occasion to apply that knowledge.

In gay spirits the voyage of discovery was begun, and doubtless the four voyageurs and their German comrade awoke the echoes of the Lake of the Hills with their rousing choruses as they paddled away from the landing-place and headed for the Slave River.

After leaving the fort the canoes hugged the south shore for twenty miles to the west, and after making a traverse of nine miles in a northerly direction they entered the Rocher River, also known as the Rivière de Quatre Fourches, into which Athabasca Lake empties after the river freshets have subsided, or through whose channel the overflow of the Peace River pours into the lake when the rains and melting snows of spring fill the streams to capacity. Mackenzie took the precautions of making this detour rather than risk the crossing of the open expanse of the lake, because of the possibility of encountering one of the sudden squalls which not infrequently arise on the northern lakes, and render their navigation dangerous. He merely followed the usual custom of making several traverses with the object of keeping as much as possible in touch with the land should an emergency demand a speedy landing. Having entered the

river—which becomes Slave River after joining with the waters of the Peace—they proceeded seven miles down-stream, encamping for the night at seven o'clock in the evening. The total distance travelled that first day in the day hours since leaving the fort was thirty-six miles. Mackenzie makes the following note in his journal: "One of the hunters killed a goose and a couple of ducks; at the same time the canoe was taken out of the water to be gummed."

Embarking at four o'clock in the morning of the following day, Thursday, June 4th, the journey was resumed, and after paddling a distance of ten miles the Peace River—it is thirty miles from Fort Chipewyan by the route taken by river steamers to-day—was reached. How his heart must have quickened its beats and how his eyes must have kindled at the sight of that stream, at that spot "upwards of a mile broad," for was it not by following it to the west that he hoped in the not far distant future to win a way through the mountain barrier and reach the Pacific, should his present adventure not produce that result? Having made a note of the width of the Peace River at its mouth, Mackenzie adds, "and its current is stronger than that of the channel which communicates with the lake. It there, indeed, assumes the name of the Slave River." At half-past seven that evening they made camp and unloaded the canoes. "Here we arrived at the mouth of Dog River, where we landed and unloaded our canoes at half-past seven in the evening, on the East side and close by the rapids." This camping-ground was apparently near the site of the present Smith's Landing, below which are the sixteen miles of rapids, the chief of which are the Rapids of the Damned and the Rapids of the Drowned, at which last Cuthbert Grant had lost, as already stated, five of his men, two canoes, and some merchandise in 1786.

Mackenzie gives the distance travelled that day as

sixty-one miles. If we deduct from this the ten miles done at the early part of the day, from their camping-ground of the night before to Peace River, the remaining distance stands at fifty-one miles. This is underestimated. The actual distance from Peace River to Smith's Landing at the head of the rapids of the Slave River is seventy miles. It has been suggested that Mackenzie habitually underestimated mileage with the object of leading his men to think they had not covered such a long distance as was the case in reality. Be this as it may, Mackenzie's miles seem to be of that elastic quality which has been expressed as "a mile and a bitee," although he occasionally miscalculated in the other direction.

Until recent years, comparatively recent that is, every pound of goods had to be taken over these rapids by frequent portages. Mackenzie portaged six times. Travellers since his day give seven as the necessary carrying places. At a later date the Hudson's Bay Company avoided all that labour and delay by instituting a Red River cart transport for the entire sixteen miles between the Landing and Fort Smith, and still later a tramway was provided. But there was then neither Smith's Landing, nor Fort Smith, nor transport other than the broad backs and toughened muscles of the crew. Some conception may be formed of the dangerous and turbulent nature of these rapids from the fact that in the course of that sixteen miles of rushing water there is a total drop of two hundred and forty feet, equivalent to fifteen feet to the mile, but in reality considerably in excess of that at the places where portaging is essential. That stretch of churning, boiling, white water is enough to make the stoutest-hearted voyageurs hesitate before daring to attempt the run. The Indians accompanying Mackenzie lost one of their canoes at the portage called the "Mountain," near which is a dangerous fall. The frail birch-bark craft was in charge of an Indian woman, and in some manner it got caught in the current, was

whirled over the falls, and instantly dashed to pieces. The woman managed to escape death by casting herself into the river while there was yet time to save herself.

As Mackenzie gazed at the swirling rapids at the "Mountain," his glance rested for a space upon a wooded island in the very midst of the turmoil of waters. Upon it he saw numbers of the White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*). They gave no heed to the proximity of man. No doubt they felt perfectly secure from harm in that so well-guarded sanctuary. That island is the farthest north breeding-place of that species.

The whole of Friday, June 5th, was consumed in passing this danger zone, yet despite the frequent portages, they travelled that day, according to the figures given by Mackenzie, no less a distance than thirty miles, under the circumstances a most excellent day's work. The following day, however, Saturday, 6th, the time lost at the carrying-places was fully made up. Notwithstanding a strong head wind that materially interfered with their progress, and cold so intense that "the Indians were obliged to use their mittens," they covered seventy-six miles. This was made possible by embarking at half-past two in the morning and continuing steadily until six o'clock in the evening, when they landed and made camp. What a foremost place the question occupies of maintaining the commissariat well provided, is shown by the frequent reference made by the explorer to the success or otherwise that attended the hunters. "In this day's progress," he notes under this date, "we killed seven geese and six ducks, and nets were also set in a small adjacent river."

On Sunday, June 7th, the journey was resumed at half-past three in the morning, but, after forcing a landing to prevent their goods becoming wet, rain compelled them to halt for the day at half-past three in the afternoon. "The Indians killed a couple of geese and as many ducks." Le Roux, however, and those with him

did not camp when Mackenzie did, but continued on their way in search of a camping-ground more to their liking. The following day the inclemency of the weather, wind and rain, obliged Mackenzie to remain in camp all day. Tuesday, 9th, saw them once again *en route*, a start being made at half-past two in the morning, and soon after two hunters who had been gone for two days rejoined them, bringing with them as the fruit of their prowess four beavers and ten geese. Sixteen miles of paddling took them to Great Slave Lake, which they found still filled with ice except along the shore. Turning east they kept along the inside of a long sand-bank, frequently touching bottom on account of the shallowness of the water, for five miles, which took them to "the houses erected by Messrs Grant and Le Roux in 1786." There they found Le Roux and his party, who had parted company with Mackenzie on Sunday, 7th.

Mackenzie found time to observe the characteristics of the country through which he passed. He noted the conditions existing along Slave River, and compared them with those obtaining at the lake. "The banks of the river both above and below the rapids," he states, "were on both sides covered with the various kinds [1] of wood common to this country, particularly the Western side, the land being lower and consisting of a rich black soil. This artificial ground is carried down by the stream and rests upon driftwood, so as to be eight or ten feet deep. The eastern banks are more elevated, and the soil a yellow clay mixed with gravel; so that the trees are neither so large or numerous as on the opposite shore. The ground was not thawed above fourteen inches in depth; notwithstanding, the leaf was at its full growth; while along the lake there was scarcely any appearance of verdure. . . . The mud-banks in the river are covered with wild-fowl; and we this morning killed two swans, ten geese, and one beaver,

[1] White spruce, Banksian pine, willows, alder, and poplars.

without suffering the delay of an hour; so that we might soon have filled the canoe with them if that had been our object." Notwithstanding this abundance of game to be had for the asking, it is significant that immediately upon landing at Great Slave Lake recourse was had to fishing, Mackenzie naïvely observing, "I then ordered the nets to be set, as it was absolutely necessary that the stores provided for our future voyage should remain untouched. The fish we now caught were carp, poisson inconnu,[1] white fish, and trout." From this it would almost appear that preference was given to fish over game, or at least wild-fowl.

Next day the explorer sent two Indians to a lake nine miles distant which, they said, was frequented by animals of various kinds, and on the succeeding day, Thursday, 11th, while the women of the party were engaged in gathering wild berries, which abounded near the camp, Mackenzie with one man proceeded to a small island near at hand and added to the larder "some dozens of swans', geese, and duck eggs," and shot two ducks and one goose. That evening the Indians who had been sent off on a hunting expedition the preceding day returned almost empty-handed, having succeeded only in killing a swan and a grey crane. Every day, however, something in the way of fresh food was brought into camp, and on Saturday, 13th, one of the hunters who had been to Slave River returned with a bag of three beaver and fourteen geese, at the same time bringing what was less welcome, three families of Indians who had left Athabasca at the same time as Mackenzie; they came empty-handed, not even a duck among them, pleading in excuse for their improvidence that they had travelled too rapidly to permit of their procuring sufficient food for their needs! which meant, of course, that they would have to be fed by Mackenzie — a drain upon

[1] The "poisson inconnu," a species akin to salmon, and weighing from eight to thirty pounds.

his supplies that he would not relish but could not refuse.

It was not until Monday, June 15th, that the ice permitted the expedition to move from the camp. At sunset they embarked and made a traverse, and shortly before midnight landed on an island, where they camped. At that hour the light was sufficient to enable Mackenzie to read and write with comfort. So light were the nights that they had not seen a star since leaving the rapids on Slave River. The following day strong winds again delayed embarkation until one o'clock noon, the course followed being in the same direction as that of the preceding day, among a chain of islands under whose shelter they hoped to cross to the north shore of the lake, but the presence of ice interfered with their progress. The delay was accepted with patience, the easier borne perhaps because of the abundance of fish caught. Two of the hunters killed a reindeer and its fawn, upon which they feasted with relish. Rain, thunder-storms, and cold winds did not add to their comfort, but it is worthy of note that not one word of complaint was made by Mackenzie or his men, who accepted with becoming fortitude and resignation conditions beyond the power of man to alter, which would indeed appear to be the natural state of mind for any reasonable man to harbour, but which is more frequently utterly absent, being replaced by ill-temper, impatience, and irritability.

At five o'clock in the afternoon of Sunday, June 21st, the ice permitted of some progress being made, and they covered a distance of fifteen miles in the lee of the islands, upon one of which they camped within three miles of the north shore, which they were prevented by the ice from reaching. Upon another island in the group they saw some reindeer, and Mackenzie sent the hunters there to get some. In this they were successful, easily killing five large and two small ones. In remembrance of this fortunate accession to their supplies the island was

promptly named Isle de Carrebœuf. "I sat up the whole of this night to observe the setting and rising of the sun. The orb was beneath the horizon four hours twenty-two minutes, and rose North 20° East by compass. It, however, froze so hard that, during the sun's disappearance, the water was covered with ice half a quarter of an inch thick."

The route taken by Mackenzie after leaving Fort Resolution, "the houses built by Messrs Grant and Le Roux in 1786," was in a general easterly direction until the chain of islands was reached, and by threading a way through the passage between them he came within three miles of the north shore. From that point he skirted along shore towards the west. Leaving the island where he had watched the sun set and rise at half-past three A.M., after travelling fifteen miles it blew so hard they were driven to take refuge on an island. There they cached two bags of pemmican for the use of Le Roux and his men upon their return journey, and on that account they named the island Isle à la Cache. There Mackenzie took an observation, and gives the position as 61° 53′ N., with a compass variation of two points. Resting there from half-past nine until the violence of the wind abated, they again got afloat, and steering west by north among the islands, not meeting with any ice, they camped for the night upon an island at eight o'clock, enduring the torments inflicted by clouds of mosquitoes, for it is remarkable that in those latitudes no sooner does the sun begin to melt the ice and snow than myriads of these pests appear as if by magic.

On Tuesday, June 23rd, they re-embarked at half-past three, and after travelling westerly for over thirty miles landed on the mainland, the north shore of Great Slave Lake, at half-past two in the afternoon, at a place where were three lodges of Red-Knife Indians, "so called from their copper knives," explains Mackenzie.

(They are sometimes called Yellow Knives.) Intelligence of the arrival of the traders spread from this small native settlement to other lodges of the same tribe at a little distance. From these Indians on the following day Le Roux purchased a quantity of furs, "upwards of eight packs of good beaver and marten skins." The Indian known as English Chief, who had set out from Fort Chipewyan with Mackenzie, collected from these same natives a hundred skins in payment of debts owing to him, and forty of these he handed over to Le Roux in settlement of indebtedness incurred two years before at Fort Resolution. With the remainder he purchased some rum and other articles from the trader, and, says Mackenzie, "I added a small quantity of that liquor as an encouraging present to him and his young son." From these Indians Mackenzie failed to extract any useful information about the river that emptied out of the lake, with the exception of the situation of the outlet of the lake itself, and, as this was an important matter, Mackenzie engaged one of the Red Knives to guide them to it. To further facilitate progress he purchased a large new canoe for the use of the guide, with whom went two of Mackenzie's Indians from Athabasca.

Keen as he was on the exploratory work he had commenced, Mackenzie did not overlook an opportunity for advancing the business interests of his company, and he informed the Red Knives that although he would continue his journey on the morrow, Le Roux would remain amongst them, and that if those of their own tribe living at a distance, and for whom they had sent, brought with them plenty of skins, the traders would go for further supplies and come back to establish a fort there. Mackenzie took advantage of the moment to indite letters to Roderick Mackenzie and to A. N. M'Leod, as this would be the last opportunity he would have until his return to send any communication to his associates.

Bidding adieu to Le Roux and his men at three o'clock

on Thursday morning, June 25th, to the accompaniment of a volley of small arms, Mackenzie and his companions left the Red Knife village to begin in earnest his voyage of discovery. Once the descent of the unknown waterway discharging from the lake was commenced, with the exception of a comparatively short distance, a region not yet visited by white man would be entered upon. It soon transpired that the Red Knife whom they had taken as a guide to the outlet of the lake was of very little service to them. Eight years had passed since he had last visited that spot, and his imperfect knowledge resulted in a great loss of time and energy, inasmuch as he led them to enter several bays which proved to have no outlet whatever. Mackenzie observed deserted lodges on shore, and other evidences of the natives having made use of that part of the country at one time. From time to time the hunters succeeded in adding swans, beaver, deer, ptarmigan, and other game to the larder, and the abundance of wild berries of various sorts was noted.

Sunday, 28th, brought no relief to their anxiety. A heavy wind and sea gave them so much trouble that, says Mackenzie, "we were obliged to make use of our large kettle to keep our canoe from filling, although we did not carry above three feet sail. The Indians very narrowly escaped. . . . The English Chief was very much irritated against the Red-Knife Indian, and even threatened to murder him, for having undertaken to guide us in a course of which he was ignorant; nor had we any reason to be satisfied with him, though he still continued to encourage us by declaring that he recollected having passed from the river through the woods to the place where he had landed." Fortunately the irascible English Chief did not put his dire threat into execution, and the next morning, Monday, 29th, brought an end to their anxiety. Embarking at four o'clock, they rounded a point, one of the horns of the blind bay into which the Red Knife had taken them the evening before, at half-

past five, and found themselves in a channel separated from the main body of the river by an island fourteen miles in length. Passing the island they found the current strong, with a depth of water varying from two to five fathoms.

More than four full days had been consumed in arriving at the river after leaving the trader Le Roux at the Red Knife lodges. In that period they had covered many miles by the use of sail and paddle in making their course westerly, and despite the anger of English Chief, and the more temperate dissatisfaction of the leader of the expedition, at their guide's incompetence, they had done exceedingly well to accomplish so much. It must be remembered that Great Slave Lake is a very large sheet of water, its area being ten thousand square miles. Its greatest length is about three hundred miles, and its extreme width fifty miles. Its shores are indented with numerous bays, some of them very deep, thus creating a coast-line of great length. Ice, fog, and wind militated against setting a straight course for an outlet seen only once eight years before by the Indian guide. As it turned out, the river could have been found quite as easily without a guide as with. Nor did the Red Knife prove of any service to them after they entered the river, for, soon coming to what is now known as Little Lake, an expansion of the Mackenzie River below the outlet of Great Slave Lake, they were at a loss what course to take to find its outlet, nor could the guide help them since he had never "explored beyond our present situation." After floundering about in shallows for some time they eventually recovered the proper channel and continued their way.

Their guide told them that "a river falls in from the North, which takes its rise in the Horn Mountain, now in sight, which is the country of the Beaver Indians; and that he and his relations frequently meet on the river." The stream referred to is that afterwards spoken of by

Mackenzie as Yellow Knife River, where the following year he established a trading post.

Leaving camp at four o'clock A.M. on the 30th, the last day of June, they ran down the river for a distance of fifty-seven miles, and at six in the afternoon "there was an appearance of bad weather; we landed, therefore, for the night; but before we could pitch our tents a violent tempest came on, with thunder, lightning, and rain; which, however, soon ceased, but not before we had suffered the inconvenience of being drenched by it. The Indians were very much fatigued, having been employed in running after wild-fowl, which had lately cast their feathers; they, however, caught five swans and the same number of geese."

Resuming the voyage at half-past four on the morning of July 1st, in a short time the river narrowed to about half a mile, with a strong current and high banks on either hand. After proceeding thirty-three miles, making frequent soundings as was Mackenzie's custom, the all-important lead was lost. "Here I lost my lead," wrote the explorer, "which had fastened at the bottom with part of the line, the current running so strong that we could not clear it with eight paddles, and the strength of the line, which was equal to four paddles." This loss was sustained about twenty-four miles above the confluence of the Liard River, which Mackenzie designates as "the river of the Mountains," which "falls in from the southward." The word Liard means poplar, with which timber the banks of the tributary are lined. He describes it as a large river whose mouth is half a mile wide.

Six miles below the junction of the Liard they landed opposite an island on which they cached two bags of pemmican for their use upon the return journey. Another reason for thus lightening the cargo was because they were in daily expectation of coming to some falls of which they had been forewarned by the Indians, and their

canoe being heavily laden, it was sound policy to reduce the load. The Indians, however, did not approve of caching the pemmican, for they professed to believe that they could not possibly make the return voyage until the following season, and by that time it would be spoiled! Resuming their way the following day at half-past five on a foggy morning, at nine o'clock they sighted a cluster of mountains that stretched as far as they could see to the southward and "whose tops were lost in the clouds," which were neither more or less than the main range of the Rocky Mountains at whose base the river flows for a long distance, until indeed their height gradually dwindles until they are lost in the low lands bordering the Arctic. In illustration of the unreliable testimony of the Indians on some occasions, may be cited the incident recorded by Mackenzie that afternoon. "At noon," he writes, "there was lightning, thunder, and rain, and at one we came abreast of the mountains; their summits appeared to be barren and rocky, but their declivities were covered with wood; they appeared also to be sprinkled with white stones, which glistened in the sun, and were called by the Indians *manetoeaseniah*, or spirit stones. I suspected they were Talc." Here indeed did "distance lend enchantment to the view," for he confesses that on their return journey "these appearances were dissolved, as they were nothing more than patches of snow."

So imbued were they all with the belief that ahead of them lay dangerous falls, that they were frequently persuaded that they actually heard the roar of the rapids close at hand, but it was not until four o'clock the following afternoon, July 3rd, that they encountered anything worthy the name. Mackenzies observes in his journal under that date: "Since four in the afternoon the current has been so strong that it was at length in an actual ebullition, and produced an hissing sound like a kettle of water in a moderate state of boiling." An

hour before entering that rapid water the explorer had observed a river that "fell in from the north," which means the east. The stream referred to is Willow River, over four hundred miles distant from Fort Resolution on Great Slave Lake.

Possibly because he was hugging the north or east shore, Mackenzie appears to have missed observing the North Nahanni River which joins the Mackenzie from the south or west side, ninety miles below the confluence of the Liard and sixteen miles above Willow River. The noise of the waters as they rush over the shallow bar is clearly heard across the Mackenzie, there a mile wide.

Mackenzie did not waste time on his expedition. Whenever possible he travelled early and late, breaking camp at an hour when the stall-fed townspeople were still snoring in their comfortable beds. The Indians with him did not find this mode of travel to their liking. They infinitely preferred to take life—and travel—less strenuously. Time is not "the essence" of anything to them. It is a commodity they have in plenty, and they think nothing of it. Haste and hurry are foreign to their nature. They marvelled at Mackenzie's eagerness to push onward, but protested in vain. Had he listened to their counsels his expedition would have resulted in failure, probably in disaster. Mindful of his object he pressed on, calling into play his shrewd tact, occasionally cajoling, sometimes compelling, the reluctant Indians, but always there was the iron hand under the velvet glove. He would not permit their indolence to deter him from prosecuting his journey with all the ardour of the enthusiast.

Camping at eight in the evening at the foot of a high hill, which in some parts rose perpendicular from the river, the explorer immediately ascended it in the company of two of his men and some Indians. An hour and a half of hard climbing took them to the top, where, to Mackenzie's surprise, he found an abandoned Indian

camp. The Indians accompanying him told him that it is usual for unarmed natives to choose such elevated sites for their residence, as they are thus better protected from their enemies. All around him Mackenzie saw other peaks as high as that he was on, and in the valleys between were numerous glistening lakes swarming with swans. The mosquitoes were so thick and troublesome that Mackenzie was unable to remain on the summit long, and speedily returned to the camp.

On July 4th they covered seventy miles, the river running with as strong a current as on the preceding afternoon, passing the mouths of "the river between two mountains," Le Vieux Grand Lac River, and Gravel River on the way. Although they had started at five in the morning they did not encamp for the night until eight o'clock, at which hour they hauled the canoes out of the water and erected their tents on an island. The hunters did not succeed in adding much provision that day, one goose being all they brought into camp. One of them had shot a beaver, but it had sunk before he could recover it. That night Mackenzie noted that the sun set at fifty-three minutes past nine, and rose again on the morning of the 5th at seven minutes before two. Shortly after sunrise they embarked, passing a number of islands and observing ahead a ridge of snow-clad mountains. After making about twenty miles they "saw several smokes on the north shore" which they believed to proceed from Indian lodges, and Mackenzie immediately ordered the canoes to make for the shore. As they approached the land they observed the natives running about in great confusion, some making for their canoes, others hastening to the shelter of the belt of trees on the bank. Mackenzie sent his hunters ashore first to parley with such as remained, but it was only after all Mackenzie's men had landed and unloaded the canoes and pitched their tents, that the affrighted natives were convinced that no hostile intent was directed against

them. They were ultimately induced to visit the camp of the strangers, and their reception speedily assured them they had nothing to fear, whereupon they hailed their companions and bade them join them.

The encampment comprised five families numbering from twenty-five to thirty people all told, of the Slave and Dog Rib tribes. Following his usual custom Mackenzie made them smoke, but they did not appear to know the use of tobacco, nor did the serving out of grog afford them any satisfaction, but when the travellers made them presents of knives, beads, flints, hatchets, and similar articles they became almost too friendly, and it proved difficult to keep them out of the tents. If Mackenzie hoped to obtain from these Indians any useful information about the route still before him, he was doomed to disappointment. They told him that it would require several winters—a winter or "snow" meaning a year—to get to the sea, and they would be old men before they could return. They further assured Mackenzie that there were two impassable falls or rapids in the river ahead of them, the nearest of which was a thirty days' march distant, and that they would encounter monsters of such horrid shapes and destructive powers that only the most vivid imagination could conjure up. It is probable that they had either seen or heard of whales, which occasionally entered the Mackenzie River and ascended it for some distance, or, as one of the monsters was described as being of huge stature bearing enormous wings, that they may have heard rumours, passed from tribe to tribe, of sailing ships seen by the natives on the Pacific coast.

While these fairy tales did not impress Mackenzie, they had a far greater effect upon his Indians, who, already weary of the long voyage, the long hours of toil, readily seized upon the opportunity to add their contribution to the Jeremiads of the natives. They told their leader that there were very few animals in the

country ahead of them, and they would starve if he persisted in going on, and that would probably be the least of the evils that might befall them! With infinite patience and tact Mackenzie succeeded in showing them how foolish were their fears, and he even induced them to persuade one of the natives to accompany the expedition in "consideration of a small kettle, an axe, a knife, and some other articles," but when the hour of re-embarkation arrived, the new recruit was loth to fulfil his bargain. Mackenzie, however, was equal to the occasion, for he naïvely observes, "we may be said, after the delay of an hour, to have compelled him to embark." Before taking his place in the canoe the recruit cut off a lock of his hair, fastened a part of it to that of his wife, blowing on it three times with "the utmost violence in his power." The same ceremony he observed in the case of his two children, but the meaning of this rite Mackenzie could not discover. That the explorer had made a favourable impression on these people may be gathered from the fact that, during their short stay with them, they danced and sang for the entertainment of their visitors. At four o'clock in the afternoon Mackenzie resumed his journey after extracting a promise from the natives that they would remain at that place till the autumn, pending the possible return of the travellers and their kinsman.

Mackenzie describes them as being "a meagre, ugly, ill-made people, particularly about the legs, which are very clumsy and covered with scabs. The latter circumstance proceeds from their habitually roasting them before the fire. Many of them appeared to be in a very unhealthy state, which is owing, as I imagine, from their natural filthiness. They are of a moderate stature, and as far as could be discovered, through the coat of dirt and grease that covers them, are of a fairer complexion than the generality of Indians who are the natives of warmer climates."

"Some of them have their hair of a great length; while others suffer a long tress to fall behind, and the rest of the hair is cut so short as to expose their ears, but no other attention whatever is paid to it. The beards of some of the old men were long, and the rest had them pulled out by the roots so that not a hair could be seen on their chins. The men have two double lines, either black or blue, tattooed upon each cheek from the ear to the nose. The gristle of the latter is perforated so as to admit a goose-quill or a small piece of wood to be passed through the orifice. Their clothing is made of the dressed skins of the rein or moose deer, though more commonly of the former. These they prepare in the hair for winter, and make shirts of both, which reach to the middle of their thighs. Some of them are decorated with an embroidery of very neat workmanship, with porcupine quills and the hair of the moose coloured red, black, yellow, and white. Their upper garments are sufficiently large to cover the whole body with a fringe around the bottom, and are used both when sleeping and awake. Their leggings come half-way up the thigh, and are sewed to the shoes; they are embroidered round the ancle and upon every seam. The dress of the women is the same as that of the men."

Bracelets and anklets made of horn, bone, or wood, and belts, garters, and head-bands of strips of leather embroidered with stained porcupine quills and bear claws, formed their ornaments. Their weapons consisted of bows and arrows, spears, daggers, and clubs. The arrows were thirty inches long, and barbed with bone, horn, flint, copper, or iron. Their canoes are small, pointed at both ends, somewhat resembling those used on the Columbia River, and generally carry but one person, seldom more than two.

Beyond the brief mention of having observed the smoke on the shore, Mackenzie passes over the incident. He may have been of the opinion that it came from

wood fires, but he seems not to have taken any steps at that time to ascertain what caused it. Upon his return journey, however, he ascertained the true reason. The smoke came from the burning lignite that for over a century has never been extinguished, the "boucans," a vast tertiary deposit of alternate layers of friable schist, lignite, pipe-clay, and vegetable mould. The schists are in a state of combustion winter and summer, but the subterranean fire, which shows itself on the surface through smoke-holes "stinking of bitumen," is intermittent.

After proceeding about six miles they passed the mouth of Great Bear River, which empties out of Great Bear Lake. This tributary is from two to three hundred yards wide at its mouth, according to the season. Mackenzie gave its width as one hundred yards. Its water is a beautiful greenish-blue colour. Six miles beyond Great Bear River a wind-storm, accompanied by rain, compelled them to make a landing and camp for the night. Their new guide malingered in the hope of being sent back to his people. In this he was disappointed. In place of letting him go, a guard was set over him to prevent him making off during the night.

On Monday, July 6th, they were afloat again at three o'clock in the morning, and made, according to Mackenzie, seventy miles before camping at seven-thirty in the evening. Mackenzie records having observed a river flowing into the Mackenzie from the west, and "I also discovered a strong rippling current or rapid which ran close under a steep precipice of the hill." The rapids he mentions are the San Sault, and within the distance of seven miles above them two rivers empty into the Mackenzie from the west—the Carcajou, ninety miles below Great Bear River, and Mountain River, five miles farther down-stream from the Carcajou. Accompanied by one of the hunters Mackenzie began the ascent of the hill, but before they got half-way they were almost

suffocated by clouds of mosquitoes, and were compelled to give up the attempt and return to their camp. The place where Mackenzie camped that night must have been close to the San Sault Rapids, and instead of having travelled seventy miles that day, they had made at least ten miles more.

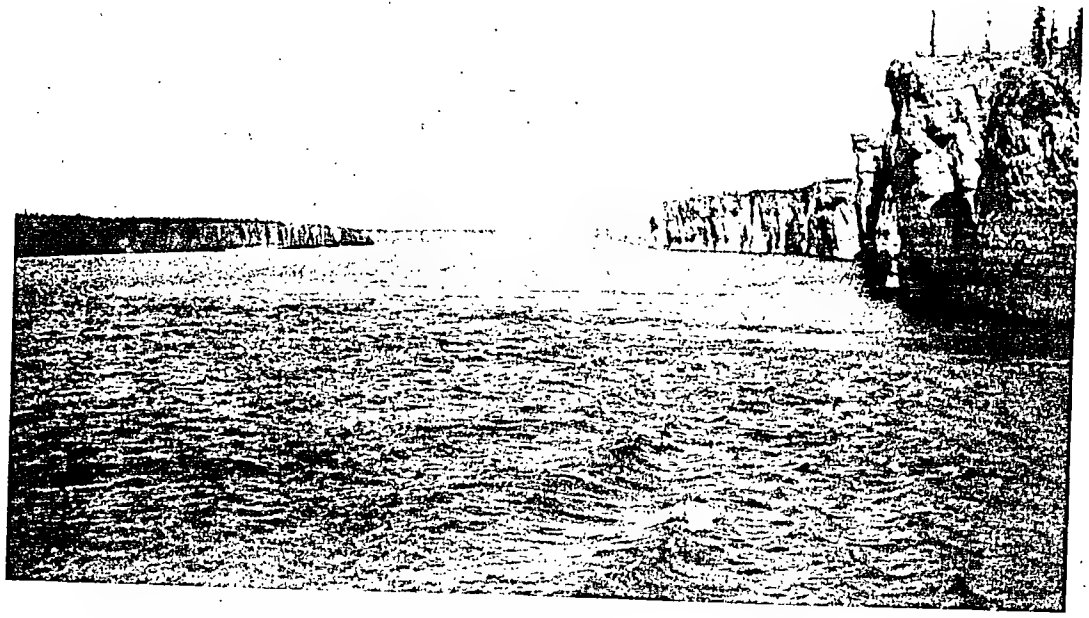
The following morning the canoes crossed to the opposite side of the river to avoid the rapid, which is confined to the east side only; "but," says the explorer, "we might have spared ourselves this trouble, as there would have been no danger in continuing our course, and yet this was one of the two formidable impassable falls they had been threatened with by the companions of their new guide! The San Sault Rapids are caused by a ledge of rock that extends one-third of the way across the river —which at that point is a mile and a quarter wide— and which at low-water is barely covered. At flood of the river the rapids make a considerable amount of noise, but offer no obstacle to river steamers.

Continuing down-stream for seventeen miles from the San Sault Rapids they came to the mouth of a river that flowed from the eastward, and there they landed at "an encampment of four fires, all the inhabitants of which ran off with the utmost speed, except an old man and an old woman." The guide called out to the fugitives, begging them to remain, but without effect. The old man, however, walked towards them without hesitation, stating that he was too old to be anxious to escape death; "at the same time he pulled his grey hair from his head by handfuls to distribute among us, and implored our favour for himself and his relations." Surely a pathetic exhibition of unselfish regard for the safety of his people that none could have resisted! Amicable relations, however, were soon established between the strangers and the eighteen people at the encampment, and the usual presents successfully relieved their alarms. The natives, in return, provided the visitors

with a meal of boiled fish. The guide, once more in touch with people who spoke his own tongue and followed customs like his own, was again seized with nostalgia, and was so eager to return to his own people that Mackenzie was under the necessity of forcing him into the canoe.

The natives told Mackenzie of the existence of another great rapid a short distance down-stream, and, in their turn, recounted such a tale of difficulties and dangers to be faced as might have daunted a less determined man. Seeing he was not to be persuaded, four canoes, with a man in each, followed Mackenzie to point out to him the safe channels through the rapids. Two miles took them to where "the river appeared to be enclosed, as it were, with lofty, perpendicular, white rocks, which did not afford us a very agreeable prospect." Mackenzie landed in order to examine the rapid, but they failed to observe anything worthy the name. Although the Indians still spoke in exaggerated terms of the dangers of the alleged rapids, they descended the stream, and, when Mackenzie followed, admitted that there was no other rapid excepting that they were then navigating.

Here again is another instance of Mackenzie's underestimation of distances. He gives that from San Sault Rapids to the rapids just mentioned, at the head of the cañon known as the Ramparts, as nineteen miles. The actual distance is thirty-nine miles. While Mackenzie notes the Indian encampment near a river flowing from the eastward, he fails to mention two streams, the Beaver River and a smaller tributary, that enter from the west a short distance above the last rapids. The explorer states that the river at the Ramparts is "not above three hundred yards in breadth," but on sounding gave a depth of fifty fathoms. More recent observers give the width of the river at that point at various figures, ranging from five hundred yards to half a mile. Notwithstanding the narrowing of the river



The Ramparts, Lower Mackenzie River.

the current is not perceptibly increased, this being accounted for by the great depth of three hundred feet, the current running at a rate not exceeding four to five miles an hour. This cañon, bounded by rocky ramparts of limestone rising to two hundred and fifty feet above the river, continues for seven miles (Mackenzie says three miles), the width of the river increasing to a mile and a half at the lower end. Ice jams are prone to occur in the cañon, and it is related that on one occasion a derelict canoe was lifted by the ice and deposited upon the top of the cliff above.

At the head of the Ramparts they encountered more natives, six families, who presented them with a quantity of fish, white fish and poisson inconnu, and another of unnamed variety of a greenish colour, probably the grayling.[1] Mackenzie gave them a few presents and left them, the men following in fifteen canoes. Six miles farther down they came to another Indian encampment "of three or more families, containing twenty-two persons," which was situated on the bank of a river of a considerable appearance, which came from the eastward. This is Hare Indian River, which is two hundred yards wide at its mouth, and which has its rise in the range of hills north-west of Great Bear Lake. Two miles above Hare Indian River is the present Fort Good Hope, which is just under the Arctic Circle. From the natives at this encampment on the Hare Indian River, Mackenzie received gifts of hares and partridges. In return he made them the usual presents, and they undertook to have skins there for him upon his return journey.

Resuming the voyage, five miles farther on they fell in with a small native camp and landed. From them

[1] Mackenzie describes the colour as greenish, which may be sufficiently accurate to apply to the grayling, which is often called bluefish in the north, the colour being a bluish-green or greenish-blue. It is the shape of a trout, takes the fly, and is excellent eating. It occurs throughout the region from Peace River to the Arctic Ocean.

Mackenzie obtained two dozen hares. Four miles lower down Mackenzie camped at nine at night, two of the men from the native camp following them in canoes. The guide renewed his complaints, now expressing his apprehensions of the Esquimaux who would be met when they neared the sea, and whom he represented as very wicked people who would kill them all. The following morning they embarked at half-past two and soon saw more Indians, to whom they gave presents but did not land, and a short distance below, observing several smokes on the shore, the travellers landed. Upon their approach the natives fled, but the Indians accompanying Mackenzie persuaded them to return to their fires. Some of them were clad in hare skins and belonged to the Hare tribe, so called because their diet consists almost wholly of hares and fish. They numbered twenty-five, all of whom received presents from Mackenzie. Here the disgruntled guide was given his liberty. He had become a perfect nuisance, having to be guarded every moment they were ashore. One of the Hares agreed to go in his place, but repented his bargain and tried to get out of it, but Mackenzie compelled him to embark.

At noon a small native camp consisting of three men, as many women, and two children was observed. Mackenzie landed and found they had just returned from a hunting expedition with some venison, which was in such a bad state that the explorer declined a present of a portion of it. These people told marvellous tales of dangers ahead, and warned them that behind an island opposite the camp there was a Manitoe or spirit in the river, that swallowed every person that approached it. Mackenzie did not care to waste the time necessary to test the truth of the story, and after making presents continued his course, fog prevailing the greater part of the day. They were now well within the Arctic Circle.

Thursday morning, July 9th, revealed the desertion of their new guide. The two Indians who had followed

them from the encampment a short distance below Hare Indian River had continued to keep in their company, and Mackenzie pressed one of them, much against his will, into the service to fill the breach. At half-past three the voyage was resumed, and soon a smoke on the east bank informed them of another native camp. As the canoes neared the shore the guide called out to the natives, but what he said none of the travellers understood. He told Mackenzie that they were wicked cruel people, but that did not deter the explorer from his purpose. The native women and children took to the woods, but the men stood their ground, and, from their shouting, appeared to be in a state of anger. The guide, however, pacified them, Mackenzie gave them presents, and soon the fugitives joined the party. Mackenzie noticed that the language spoken was not the same as that of the Hares, and that they were of a more pleasing appearance, full-bodied and healthy-looking, and clean in their persons. English Chief could understand them, but was himself not understood by them. They were probably of the Loocheux tribe, inhabiting the district intervening between the Hares and the Esquimaux. From the latter, their hereditary foes, they obtained iron and other articles. Legend says that the Loocheux forced the Esquimaux north. If that be correct, they rendered the latter a good service, for their country is superior to that occupied by the Loocheux. From time immemorial there has been bad blood between the two, and fighting took place frequently. In the '60's, in a pitched battle, the last that took place, only two Loocheux escaped alive, while not one Esquimaux was killed. The Hudson Bay trader at Fort Macpherson paid the blood price of the slain Loocheux, and thus prevented a vendetta.

Their arms and utensils differed but little from those seen at other camps. Their shirts, instead of being cut square at the bottom, tapered to a point from the belt

down to the knee, and were embellished with a fringe. Their leggings, unusually long, were fastened by a cord round the waist. One of the men was dressed in a garment made of the skins of the musk-rat. "Their peculiar mode of tying the hair is as follows," describes Mackenzie: "that which grows on the temples or the forepart of the skull is formed into two queues, hanging down before the ears; that of the scalp or crown is fashioned in the same manner to the back of the neck, and is then tied with the rest of the hair at some distance from the head. A thin cord is employed for these purposes, and very neatly worked with hair, artificially coloured. The women, and indeed some of the men, let their hair hang loose on their shoulders, whether it be long or short." From these people Mackenzie and his men purchased moose skins and buckskin shirts.

One of the Loocheux consented to go with them as a guide, but when Mackenzie's men fired a volley of powder only, he would have withdrawn had not the explorer explained that it was merely a signal of friendship. Those people had never before heard the report of a gun. He insisted, however, in going in his own canoe, but soon asked to be taken in with the travellers, inspired thereto by the songs of two of his brothers who followed in their canoes. "On our putting to shore," says Mackenzie, "in order to leave his canoe, he informed us that on the opposite hill the Esquimaux, three winters before, killed his grandfather."

At four o'clock in the afternoon another smoke sent the canoes to the west shore. The natives made "a most terrible uproar, talking with great vociferation, and running about as if they were deprived of their senses, while the greater part of the women, with the children, fled away." Mackenzie believed that "if we had been without people to introduce us, they would have attempted some violence against us, for when the Indians send away their women and children it is always

with a hostile design." They were, however, soon pacified, and presents put them all on a friendly footing. The encampment consisted of forty people in all. Mackenzie names them Deguthes Dinees or Quarrellers. Doubtless they also were Loocheux. As Mackenzie was about to re-embark the guide expressed a wish to remain behind, giving as his excuse that he feared they would not return, and also that the Esquimaux might kill all hands. These objections were overruled, and in the end he consented to go on and gave no further trouble. Eight canoes followed the expedition as they resumed the voyage. That night camp was made on the east side of the river, and, from natives found there, Mackenzie learned that from the encampment he had visited that morning the distance overland on the east side to the sea was not long, and that from his present camp by proceeding westward it was still shorter. At that place Mackenzie observed "a large quantity of wild flax, the growth of last year, laying on the ground, and the new plants were sprouting up through it," and this be it remembered well within the Arctic Circle.

Embarking at four o'clock on the morning of the 10th, they noticed that the river banks were very low and the land in general low-lying, except the mountains whose bases were ten miles distant. A short distance below the starting-point the river widened considerably, "and runs through various channels formed by islands." Mackenzie had arrived at the delta of the river. The delta is one hundred miles long from north to south, and seventy wide at its broadest point. Which channel to follow was the question then to be decided. The guide naturally enough gave preference to the eastern-most channel, inasmuch as it was the farthest removed from the Esquimaux, the hereditary enemies of his people. Mackenzie, however, chose the middle channel. That day he took an observation and records the latitude as 67° 47′ N. This surprised him, since it gave his position

farther north and more to the east than he had expected, from which he deduced the river must empty "into the Hyperborean Sea; and," he adds resolutely, "though it was probable that, from want of provision, we could not return to Athabasca in the course of the season, I nevertheless determined to penetrate to the discharge of them."

The new guide now in his turn began to weary of his position, and exerted himself to dissuade the two Indian hunters from proceeding farther, and to such good purpose that, Mackenzie states, the hunters became so disheartened "that I was confident they would have left me if it had been in their power." He was obliged to placate them by promising he would turn back in seven days more if they did not reach the sea then. The natives who had followed them in their own canoes on the previous day returned to their homes that morning.

On Saturday, 11th, Mackenzie sat up all night to observe the sun, and at half an hour after midnight awakened one of his men to view a spectacle he had never seen before—the midnight sun. The man, thinking the day far advanced, began calling his companions, and Mackenzie had some ado to persuade them that it was but a short time past midnight. At a quarter before four they embarked, and at noon landed at a place where some Esquimaux had recently camped. They counted where fifty or sixty fires had burned. Scattered about were pieces of whalebone, burned leather, and other indications of the presence of man, "and there was the singular appearance of a spruce fir, stripped of its branches to the top like an English May-Pole." This peculiarly trimmed tree, with a tuft left at the top, is known as a lob-stick, which may be described as a sort of memorial erected in honour of some one who had passed that way, and whose companions salute it whenever they again visit that locality. At Point Separation, the place where Sir John Franklin and Dr Richardson

parted on July 3rd, 1826, two lobsticks were prepared to mark the occasion. Twenty-two years subsequently Richardson again visited Point Separation, and he records under date July 30th, 1848: "In compliance with my instructions, a case of pemmican was buried at this tree on the Point, and placed in it, along with the pemmican, a bottle containing a memorandum of the Expedition, and such information respecting the Company's post as I judged would be useful to the boat party should they reach this river. The lower branches of the tree were lopped off, a part of its trunk denuded of bark, and a broad arrow painted thereon with red paint. In performing these duties at this place, I could not but recall to mind the evening of July 3rd, 1826, passed on the very same spot with Sir John Franklin. We were then full of joyous anticipation." It may be observed that in 1849 two boats of the *Plover* visited the spot and duly found the pemmican. In whose honour the lobstick observed by Mackenzie had been prepared is unknown.

Continuing down the channel the river widened for a distance of about five miles, and then flowed in a number of narrow meandering streams between low-lying islands. At four in the afternoon they landed at a place where there were three native huts, in some measure resembling the keekwillie houses formerly used by the Indians in Southern British Columbia. There, too, they found whalebone, floats of poplar bark for nets, sledge runners, and posts upon which the Esquimaux hung their nets to dry. Embarking again, they did not camp for the night until eight o'clock, having travelled fifty-four miles that day. They had not seen a single Esquimaux, although fresh footprints indicated some had been in that neighbourhood recently. Again the discontent of his men broke out owing to the tales told them by the guide. He asserted that another day would take them to a large lake—the Arctic,—although neither

he nor his friends had ever seen that particular part of it. He told also of whales, polar bears, and another large animal—probably the walrus. The gift of a capote to English Chief and of a moose skin to the guide pacified the one and silenced the other. These bribes kept them quiet for the nonce.

Next day, Sunday, 12th, they again embarked and proceeded on the same meandering course as on the previous day, landing at ten o'clock where stood four huts, the same as those seen the day before, and beside them runners of sledges were laid together as though in readiness for the return of their owners. A large stone kettle, pieces of nets made of sinews, and other articles were also seen. Mackenzie says in his journal of that date: "When we had satisfied our curiosity we re-embarked, but were at a loss what course to steer, as our guide seemed to be as ignorant of this country as ourselves. Though the current was very strong, we appeared to have come to the entrance of the lake." He took an observation, which gave his position as 69° 1′ N. Continuing the same course for fifteen miles to the most westerly point of a high island, they found that "the lake was quite open to us to the westward, and out of the channel of the river there was not more than four feet of water, and in some places the depth did not exceed one foot. From the shallowness of the water it was impossible to coast to the westward. At five o'clock we arrived at the island, and during the last fifteen miles five feet was the deepest water. The lake now appeared to be covered with ice for about two leagues' distance, and no land ahead, so that we were prevented from proceeding in this direction by the ice and the shallowness of the water along the shore. We landed at the boundary of our voyage in this direction." Accompanied by English Chief, Mackenzie ascended to the highest part of the island, and from that vantage-point surveyed all around. Solid ice extended from the south-west to

the eastward; to the south-west a chain of mountains loomed dimly in the distance, stretching to the north beyond the edge of the ice.

Mackenzie was indeed nearly at the end of his journey. It has been remarked by some who have followed the records of his daring exploit, that he did not express any regret at failing to reach the sea. He did, however, indirectly voice that regret, if only to assert the loyalty of those he calls "my people," by whom he surely must have meant only his Canadians, for the Indians would have been only too happy had he cut short his expedition long before he began the return voyage. "My people could not at this time refrain from expressions of real concern," he wrote, "that they were obliged to return without reaching the sea; indeed, the hope of attaining this object encouraged them to bear, without repining, the hardships of our unremitting voyage. For some time past their spirits were animated by the expectation that another day would bring them to the *Mer d'ouest*; and even in our present situation they declared their readiness to follow me wherever I should be pleased to lead them."

That night the rising water, the incoming tide, obliged them to rise from their beds on mother earth and remove the baggage to drier ground. At noon on the 13th Mackenzie took another observation and found their position to be 69° 14′ N. That afternoon he again climbed to the highest point of the island to reconnoitre. A heavy wind that had been blowing since noon had not moved the ice. Far away to the north-west he could just distinguish two small islands in the ice. It continued to blow that evening, and was still blowing when the camp stirred the following morning. As he had not retired until three o'clock in the morning he did not rise until nine, when he was aroused to decide what strange animals were those his men saw disporting in the water. They were whales, and he at once embarked with his crew in

the canoe and set off in pursuit of the huge creatures. They failed to overtake them, which in calmer moments Mackenzie considered most fortunate, "as a stroke from the tail of one of these enormous fish would have dashed the canoe to pieces." The whales were the Beluga or White Whale, one of the chief articles of food of the Arctic Esquimaux.

The fog lifting at noon, Mackenzie embarked to make an inspection of the ice, but after being not more than an hour on the water a high wind sprang up which compelled them to hasten to land, narrowly escaping disaster. Continuing their way in the shelter of some islands, Mackenzie sought in vain for Esquimaux, whom he was anxious to fall in with in order to obtain information from them. At eight o'clock they landed on the eastern end of the island they had left in the earlier part of the day, and which Mackenzie had named Whale Island, a long narrow island. That morning he had caused a post to be erected near their camp at the western end of the island, and on it he carved his name, the latitude, 69° 14′ N., the number of men with him, and the duration of their stay there.

At four o'clock on Wednesday morning, 15th, Mackenzie perceived that the water had again invaded their baggage. When they had seen the rise and fall of the water at the western end of the island, they had at the time attributed it to the wind, but as the wind had not changed on this second occasion it was necessary to find another and the real cause of the occurrence, and Mackenzie decided that the tide was responsible. An observation taken at noon gave their position as 69° 7′ N. The following day Mackenzie observed the rise and fall of the tide more closely, and found that it varied from sixteen to eighteen inches only. At some parts of the Arctic coast—*e.g.*, that part between the Mackenzie River and Point Barrow, the rise is from eight to fifteen

inches; farther east, the rise increases to as much as three or four feet.

On the 16th, Thursday, they again embarked about seven o'clock and steered under sail for the islands, Mackenzie still hoping to fall in with some Esquimaux, but in this he was disappointed. The guide asserted that they had probably gone to their distant hunting and fishing grounds, and none would likely be met with "unless at a small river that falls into the great one (Mackenzie) from the eastwards, at a considerable distance from our immediate situation. We accordingly made for the river and stemmed the current."

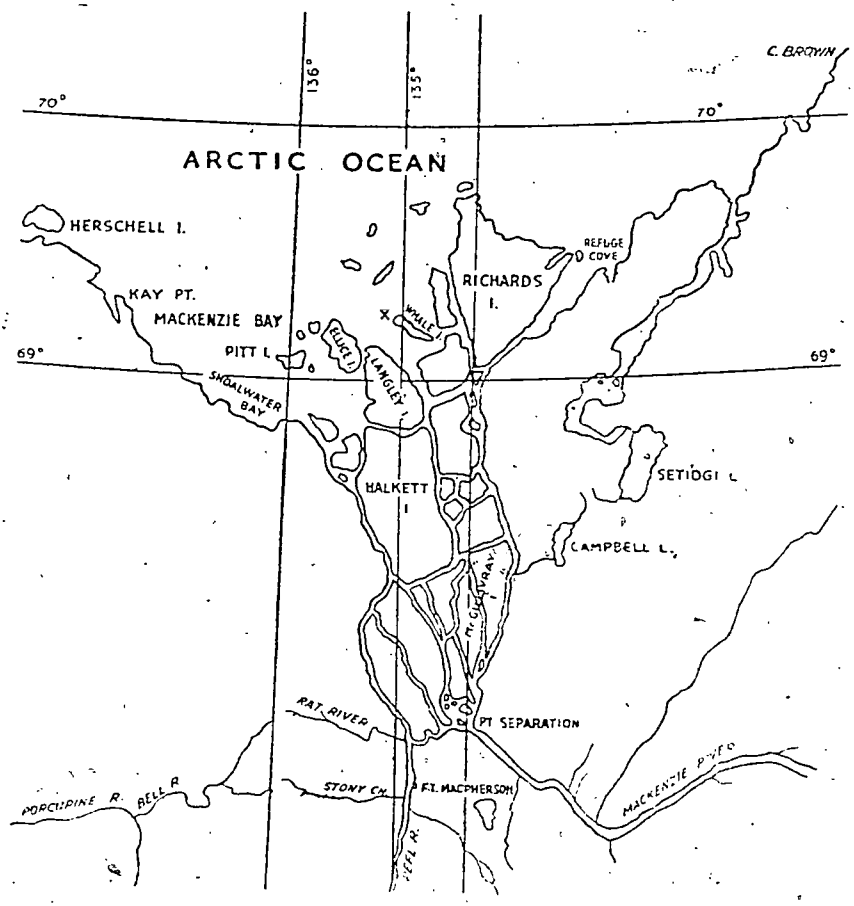
In those last ten words Mackenzie announces the beginning of the return journey. There were excellent reasons why he should not delay in retracing his steps. Their reserve provisions had run so low, only five hundred pounds in weight remaining, that there was barely sufficient to last fifteen people, the strength of the expedition at that time, twelve days without contributions by the hunters. Hemmed in by ice, any material advance was out of the question, and the season of the year, together with the discontent of the Indians with him, made it hazardous to defer the departure for the south. Mackenzie accepted the situation and set his face homewards to Fort Chipewyan.

It has been asserted that Mackenzie did not actually reach the Arctic Ocean, but only penetrated as far as the delta of the great river that bears his name. It is pointed out in support of this contention that Mackenzie himself, in his published voyages, states that his men were concerned "because they were obliged to return without reaching the sea; indeed, the hope of attaining this object encouraged them to bear, without repining, the hardships of our unremitting voyage. For some time past their spirits were animated by the expectation that another day would bring them to the *Mer d'ouest;*

and even in our present situation they declared their readiness to follow me where I should be pleased to lead them." This is taken to be irrefutable internal evidence that Mackenzie had failed in his prime object.

There is, however, another meaning to be read into those words. His men, and he himself without doubt, had hoped to reach, by the river they had followed, the western sea, the *Mer d'ouest*, and sail upon its surface. Instead, they had arrived at the Arctic Ocean and found further progress barred by the ice, thus preventing them continuing the voyage to the goal of their cherished hopes, the *Mer d'ouest*. From Whale Island Mackenzie had scanned the horizon in every direction. Close at hand lay a stretch of open water, that in which they had pursued the Beluga whales. Enclosing that space a barrier of ice extended far in the distance, and beyond its gleaming surface lay the open sea. These conditions are frequently found at the mouth of the Mackenzie. Had the wind shifted the ice—as Mackenzie hoped it would—he and his men would have been enabled to sail at will upon the frozen ocean, and, if so disposed, follow the coast to Point Barrow and through Behring Strait into the Pacific Ocean, the western sea of their dreams. In the northerly offing Mackenzie discerned, dimly, two small islands; elsewhere nothing but ice and water, conclusive evidence that they had emerged from the delta of the river and had reached the sea itself, as a glance at the accompanying map will show.

The words "stemmed the current" are interpreted by some to indicate that Mackenzie was still in the river and could not have reached the sea for that reason, a conclusion that is not sustained by the facts. It might be said with equal truth that Simon Fraser did not reach the Pacific when he descended the Fraser River, because he did not cross the Gulf of Georgia, navigate the strait of Juan de Fuca, and enter the Pacific off Cape Flattery. Between him and the full expanse of ocean lay the archi-



ARCTIC OCEAN AND MACKENZIE R. DELTA.

Whale Island, marked with a ×, Alex. Mackenzie's Farthest North Land.

pelago in the Gulf of Georgia and the larger Vancouver Island. No one would have the temerity, however, to deliberately assert that Fraser did not reach the Pacific. In the same way it might be said of Mackenzie himself that on his second great journey across the Rocky Mountains to the waters of Bentinck Inlet, he did not reach the Pacific because he was only on an arm of the sea many miles distant from open water, with islands intervening. Splitting of hairs is a puerile pursuit, and leads nowhere.

It is stated, in support of the contention that Mackenzie did not actually reach the Arctic, that he was still in the current of the river, and that when he began his homeward journey he "stemmed the current." This is quite true; he did stem the current, but he also said, first, "we made for the river," showing his belief that he had reached the sea.

It is not uncommon for river currents to reach far into the body of water that receives them. Taking the Fraser River as an instance of this, it will recur to those who have read Captain Vancouver's journals that while still a considerable distance from land they felt the current and observed floating debris, indicating the proximity of a river of considerable volume, but neither he nor the Spanish navigators, Galiano and Valdez, actually saw the river, and ultimately went away convinced that there was none there, notwithstanding the evidence of their senses and the shallowness of the water indicating alluvial deposits brought down from the Hinterland by some river. So it is with the Mackenzie. The pouring of that vast volume of water into the Arctic is attended by a strong current reaching far into the sea.

It has been remarked that Mackenzie does not say anything in his journal to show disappointment at the result of his journey; perhaps this abstention from complaint may be accounted for by his knowledge that he had done what he set out to do, to descend the river

to its mouth. Those who maintain that Mackenzie did not reach the sea further quote, in support of their position, the following passage from Mackenzie's journal, under date of August 13th, while on the voyage upstream: "The English Chief was very much displeased at my reproaches, and expressed himself to me in person to that effect. This was the very opportunity which I wanted, to make him acquainted with my dissatisfaction for some time past. I stated to him that I had come a great way, at a very considerable expense, *without having completed the object of my wishes.*" Can any one state positively what the complete object of Mackenzie's wishes was, if not to reach the Western Sea? It is possible, but not likely, that he may have made the statement to English Chief to impress upon him the extent of his displeasure with that somewhat rascally individual. The North-West Passage was still an alluring bait to explorers; and if Mackenzie could have succeeded in rounding Alaska and reaching some of the Russian posts on the north-west coast, he would have accomplished something material towards the solution of the question.

Mackenzie's observations, which are reasonably accurate, prove that he did enter the Arctic Ocean, even if his ignorance of the fact at the time is admitted. He gives the latitude of the west end of Whale Island, his most northerly landing, as 69° 14′ N., and the position of his camp at the eastern end of the same island as 69° 7′ N., which are substantially correct. Both those points tally with recent observations of the position of Whale Island, which cartographers place well clear of the delta in the open sea. It is quite clear, therefore, that Mackenzie fulfilled his determination "to penetrate to the discharge" of the river into the Hyperborean Sea, even though he may not have accomplished all he had hoped to do.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RETURN TO FORT CHIPEWYAN.

TURNING his back on the Arctic Ocean, Mackenzie began the ascent of the Grand River on July 16th, keeping to the easterly side. In the afternoon the water was everywhere so shallow that they could touch bottom with the paddles. Camping at seven in the evening they set the nets as usual, and the Indian hunters killed two geese, two cranes, and a white owl. The writer does not know whether white owl makes a delectable dish or not, but can vouch for the delicacy of their eggs. Once within shelter of the river they found an amelioration of the climate. "Since we entered the river," says Mackenzie—and here is additional testimony to his having been out of it—"we experienced a very agreeable change in the temperature in the air; but this pleasant circumstance was not without inconvenience, as it subjected us to the persecution of the mosquitoes."

It is remarkable what myriads of these pests infest the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. Throughout the northern country, no sooner does the heat of the sun begin to melt the ice and snow than clouds of mosquitoes seem to spring out of the very ice itself. And not only are these winged torments present in countless millions, but enormous hosts of other flies assail the unprotected human. One traveller says of them: "We thought we had met mosquitoes on the Athabasca. The Athabasca mosquito is gentle, ineffective, compared with his

cousin of Smith's Portage. Dr Sussex sits on the waggon seat behind and explains the mosquito. He tells us that they are of the 'order Diptera' (sub-order Nemocera), 'and chiefly of the family Culicidæ,' and he also goes so far as to tell us that they 'annoy man.' As we bump along in the muskeg and the creatures surround us in a smother, he ventures to assert that 'the life of the adult insect is very short,' and that it is the female who stings. The doctor is a born instructor. We learn that 'the natural food of the mosquito is a drop or two of the juice of a plant.' We suspect the doctor of fagging up on mosquito out of some convent dictionary while we have been at Fond du Lac. He is like the parson introduced by his friend of the cloth. 'Brother Jones will now give an address on Satan. I bespeak for him your courteous attention, as the reverend gentleman has been preparing this address for weeks, and comes to you *full of his subject*.'

"The adult mosquito may have a short life, but it is a life crammed full of interest; if the natural food of the mosquito is the sweet juice of a pretty flower, then a lot of them in this latitude are imperilling their digestion on an unnatural commissariat. And if the female mosquitoes do all the fine work, there is a great scarcity of male mosquitoes on Smith's Portage, and once more in the North the suffragette comes into her own." [1]

On taking up the nets on Friday morning, 17th, they found only six fish, a mere aggravation to the appetites of the ravenously hungry men. Embarking at four o'clock in the morning, they passed four encampments which appeared to have been recently inhabited. They landed on a small island near the eastern shore, which Mackenzie believed to be possessed "somewhat of a sacred character," the top being covered with graves. About the graves they found various dishes and other utensils, as well as a canoe and sledges, which had been

[1] Cameron's 'The New North.'

the property in life of those who could now use them no more. The frame of the canoe was fastened with whalebone. The sledges, four to eight feet in length, had wooden runners two inches thick, shod with small pieces of horn fastened with wooden pegs.

Early in the afternoon they came to the first spruce tree they had seen for some time. "There are very few of them on the mainland, and they are very small," comments Mackenzie. "Those are larger which are found on the islands, where they grow in patches, close together. It is, indeed, very extraordinary that there should be any wood whatever in a country where the ground never thaws above five inches from the surface."

Going into camp for the night at seven in the evening, the explorer ascended to the highest point in the vicinity, and obtained "a delightful view of the river, dividing into innumerable streams, meandering through islands, some of which were covered with wood, others with grass. The mountains that formed the opposite horizon were at the distance of forty miles. The inland view was neither so extensive nor agreeable, being terminated by a near range of bleak barren hills, between which are small lakes or ponds, while the surrounding country is covered with tufts of moss, without the shade of a single tree. Along the hills is a kind of fence made with branches, where the natives had set snares to catch white partridges." [1]

The hunters, who had been on shore all day foraging, only brought in two crane and one goose.

Hauling in the nets on the morning of the 18th, they were found to be empty—not a very promising outlook for the day's provender. At 3 A.M. they resumed the journey against the current, passing several deserted camping grounds, where, however, the footprints of human beings were very fresh in the sand, and must have been made very recently. Mackenzie's expectations of

[1] Ptarmigan.

meeting some of these natives at the tributary river to which the guide was now conducting them ran very high.

He also observed during the day a number of "lob-sticks" in several places, and explains that they denote the immediate abode of the natives, and probably serve for signals to direct each other to their respective winter quarters. In the valleys and low lands near the river they found abundance of cranberries, the fruit of two seasons being picked off the same plant. Mackenzie was no botanist, and remarks that he saw "a great variety of other plants and herbs, whose names and properties are unknown to me."

That day the hunters met with better success, killing two reindeer and eight geese, and the well-supplied larder came as a welcome relief, for the mouldy pemmican which had formed the major part of their diet when game or fish was scarce was not provocative of either appetite or satisfaction.

Mackenzie did not sit in the canoe all day while his men laboured at the paddle. Frequently he landed, and, accompanied by one or more of the party, walked along the banks, taking note of whatever appealed to him as of interest. Walking on this day with English Chief, he found it very disagreeable and fatiguing, the country being one continual morass except on the barren hills. He observed that the face of the high land towards the river was in some places rocky, and in others a mixture of sand and stone, veined with a kind of red earth with which the natives bedaub themselves.

When they embarked on the morning of Sunday, 19th, they discovered that their guide, the Loocheux, had disappeared, leaving behind him his bow and arrows and also the moose robe Mackenzie had furnished him with, "and went off in his shirt, though the weather was very cold." Mackenzie questioned the Indian hunters whether they knew why the Loocheux had deserted them, but they could only attribute it to fear: first, lest he should

be enslaved; and second, because of his alarm when he had seen how easily they had killed the two deer the previous day. That day they killed twenty-two young geese. "They were of a small kind," remarks Mackenzie regretfully.

That evening they made their camp near an abandoned Indian camping-ground, about which were strewn pieces of bone, horn, &c., showing that the natives had been engaged while there in making arms and other requisites.

Embarking at three in the morning of the 20th, they passed in the forenoon the tributary where Mackenzie had hoped to see some Esquimaux, but there were no signs of any to be seen, much to his disappointment. Rain fell all morning, and early in the afternoon it fell so heavily, accompanied by high wind, that they were driven to make camp at two o'clock. Notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, they succeeded in killing fifteen geese and four swans. Mackenzie noticed that the hills near at hand were clothed with spruce and small birch trees to their very summits.

On the 21st they embarked at the early hour of half-past one in the morning, and at ten were clear of the delta, passing the last of the islands between which the numerous channels meandered at that hour. Once more in the main stream, recourse was had to tracking—*i.e.*, hauling the canoes along by means of a line—this method proving more expeditious than the paddles alone. At half-past eight that evening they landed at the same spot where they had camped on the 9th inst., where they had observed the wild flax growing. An hour after making camp some of the natives appeared, among them the brother of their runaway guide. Mackenzie's explanation of the desertion did not satisfy this man, but he expressed his readiness to believe anything the explorer would tell him if he were given a few beads! Instead of complying with this modest request, Mackenzie gave the fellow his brother's bow and arrows which had

been left behind when he deserted. At this place Mackenzie saw the sun set for the first time since his former visit there. He observed that the river had gone down three feet since that time.

Breaking camp the next morning, the men tracking, Mackenzie walked with the Indians to their encampment. It took three hours of hard walking to reach the huts. There being a large quantity of fish hung up to dry, Mackenzie purchased as many as could be stowed in the canoe, paying a few strings of beads for them. From these people they learned that the Esquimaux had told them that they had seen "large canoes full of white men to the westward eight or ten winters ago, from whom they obtained iron in exchange for leather." These were probably Russian or British ships on the Pacific or the Behring Sea.

Resuming the ascent of the river on the 23rd, they found progress difficult owing to the nature of the beach. At five in the afternoon the Indians put ashore in order to camp, but, to their disgust and annoyance, Mackenzie pushed on, making his camp at the same site as on the 8th on the downward voyage. At ten o'clock the Indians rejoined him there in a sulky mood. During the past six days they had not touched any of their reserve store of provisions. In that period they had eaten two reindeer, four swans, forty-five geese, and a considerable quantity of fish. "But it is to be considered," remarks Mackenzie, "that we were ten men and four women. I have always observed that the north men possessed very hearty appetites, but they were very much exceeded by those with me since we entered this river. I should really have thought it absolute gluttony in my people if my own appetite had not increased in similar proportion."

Embarking at 5 A.M. on Friday, 24th, they were obliged to resort to the line soon after starting; it was impossible to make any progress against the current with the paddles. Later on an aft wind enabled them to hoist a sail, which

gave them considerable relief, for the men re-embarked and enjoyed a rest. At one place, where the Indians resort for flints, they found "pieces of petroleum which bears a resemblance to yellow wax, but is more friable." English Chief told Mackenzie that rocks of a similar kind are found at the back of Great Slave Lake, where the Chipewyan get their copper. At noon they landed near a native lodge, the women and children hiding in the woods as usual, leaving three men with drawn bows to resist the intruders. The usual conference followed, and goodwill obtained by giving presents. One of Mackenzie's Indians having broken a paddle, attempted to take a good one by force from one of the natives. Mackenzie interposed and prevented this being done, much to the gratification of the owner, who must have been surprised at this act of clemency on the part of a body of men so superior in numbers. That night the travellers camped at seven o'clock, and were visited by an Indian they had seen before, who remained with them until nine, when he returned to his own lodge.

At a quarter past three the journey was resumed on the 25th, and as the force of the current had abated they could use the paddles again. They passed several native encampments they had not observed on their way down. At seven o'clock a thunder-storm broke, and although they landed and unloaded the canoes and erected the tents as quickly as possible, it struck them with so much violence as to threaten to sweep everything away. The ridge-pole of Mackenzie's tent, a stout timber three inches in diameter, was snapped in two, and the men were obliged to lie flat upon the ground to escape injury from the stones that were hurled through the air by the wind like so much sand. On Sunday morning, 26th, they embarked at four o'clock, and at eight landed at an Indian camp of three lodges, whose occupants were asleep, and were greatly alarmed when awakened by the visitors, though most of them had seen the party on

the downward journey. From these people, in return for some beads and other trifles, a large quantity of fresh-caught poisson inconnu was obtained.

Among the natives at this encampment was a Dog-rib Indian, an exile from his own country, whom English Chief understood as readily as if they were fellow-countrymen, who stated that he had learned from the Hare Indians, among whom he now lived, that on the other side of the mountains to the south-west is a river which falls into the White Man's Lake—in this instance the Pacific Ocean—very much larger than the one they were then on, and that the natives there are very wicked, and kill ordinary men with a glance from their eyes—the evil eye with a vengeance! The Hare Indians apparently settled the North-West Passage question easily enough, according to the Dog-rib, who stated that as there is no known communication by water with this river, the natives who saw it went over the mountains.

Filled as he was with thought for the needs and safety of his party and the mission upon which they were engaged, Mackenzie did not forget, as has already been pointed out, his rôle of fur-trader. The Dog-rib having said that there were some beavers in the country, Mackenzie improved the occasion. "I told him," he writes, "to hunt it, and desire the others to do the same, as well as martens, foxes, beaver-eater or wolverine, &c., which they might carry to barter for iron with his own nation, who are supplied with goods by us near their country." At this same place Mackenzie had to exercise the utmost vigilance to prevent his Indians abducting a Hare Indian woman to whom they had taken a fancy, and in this connection he states that the Indians with him were ever ready to take what they could from the natives without payment or any return.

At noon that same day they passed a river which the natives called the Winter Road River, coming in from the eastward. They were again enabled to use the sail, and

did not camp until half-past seven in the evening. On the morrow, Monday, 27th, they embarked at half-past two in the morning, and at seven landed at the native camp near the Rampart rapids which they had visited on the 7th. Although these people had on the former occasion promised to have a stock of furs, &c., brought from a distant lake by the time of Mackenzie's return, he found they had done nothing. From them, however, he tried to obtain some information about the river the Dog-rib had told him of, and which evidently interested him extremely. One of them said he had been told by Indians of other tribes that the river beyond the mountains flowed into "the great lake," and that at its mouth was a White Man's Fort. With this information as a basis, Mackenzie attempted to solve the problem of the geography of that sea and river. He says: "This I took to be Unalascha Fort, and consequently the river to the west to be Cook's River, and that the body of water or sea into which this river discharges itself at Whale Island communicates with Norton Sound." The western river was not, however, Cook's River, as he surmised, but the Yukon. That the mouth of the Mackenzie communicates with Norton Sound was a better founded supposition, but the distance between the two was evidently a great deal longer than Mackenzie imagined. Even at that date there was little known about the geography of the north-west coast. In the map published in 'Beechey's Voyages,' on which is shown the course of H.M.S. *Blossom* in 1825-6, there is no indication of the existence of the Yukon River. The Mackenzie is marked by a short line only. (Note C.)

As the natives at this camp informed Mackenzie that a short distance farther up the river there were some people who inhabited the region of "the opposite mountains," the Rockies, he proceeded thither, arriving at ten in the forenoon. He had not arrived a moment too soon. His own Indians had preceded him, and in some unexplained

manner had succeeded in arousing the hostility of the people Mackenzie wished to interview, who had seized the canoe of the visiting Indians, and in the struggle that ensued the frail craft was broken. Mackenzie's men were about to revenge the insult when he reached the spot and threw oil on the troubled waters. But although Mackenzie remained there until the following morning, he did not succeed in extracting from them any more definite information about the western river about which his curiosity was aroused than what he had already gathered from the natives farther down-stream. They recounted many absurd tales of the wonderful powers of the people living in that distant region. Mackenzie, however, formed the opinion that they knew more than they were willing to divulge. He bluntly told them so, and threatened that if they did not frankly disclose what they knew, he would compel one of their number to guide him to the mysterious river. This threat alarmed them so much that they told him they would surely die if he took any of them away. At the same time they tried to persuade English Chief to remain with them, telling him that he would be killed if he continued with Mackenzie, and, strange to say, these arguments almost prevailed. As an illustration of the masterful way Mackenzie had in dealing with Indians, an incident that occurred at this camp may be mentioned. One of the native dogs would persist in sniffing around the explorer's baggage, doubtless incited by the scent of the reserve store of pemmican, &c., and in vain had the animal been driven off time and again, and the natives told to keep their dogs away. Mackenzie deliberately shot the creature. The report of the pistol, and the instantaneous death of the dog as a result, so alarmed the natives that the women took their children on their backs and fled to the woods, and the woman to whom the dog belonged declared in the deepest woe that the loss of her five children the preceding winter had not affected

her so much as did the death of her dog. The gift of a few beads, however, speedily removed the weight of woe. From these people Mackenzie obtained a supply of dry and fresh fish and a quantity of whortleberries, for which they received payment in kind—awls, beads, knives, &c.

Leaving this camp at four o'clock the following morning, July 28th, they visited the fishing-nets set by their hosts, and, at their invitation, helped themselves to what fish they found caught in them. Ascending the Rampart rapids without any trouble, they visited some native lodges where was much fish but no people. Some of Mackenzie's Indians appropriated certain articles they found in the lodges, but he would not permit them to take them without payment being made by leaving beads and other articles in lieu of the things taken. Mackenzie himself took a net, and left a large knife in payment for it. Continuing the voyage, at one o'clock at noon they landed again where a fire was burning, but the natives who had kindled it were in hiding. The hunters soon found them and two hundred geese they had killed, most of the birds being in an advanced state of decomposition. Mackenzie picked out thirty-six that were eatable, and paid for them in the usual manner, and then departed, camping for the night at eight o'clock. Shortly afterwards a violent storm blew down the tents and deluged their camp with rain.

On Wednesday, 29th, embarking at four, with an aft wind that sent them along at a lively rate, they reached the San Sault rapids at ten o'clock, and were obliged to use the line to get up, the current being much stronger than when they went down. The water had fallen five feet in the interval. The next day they were able to use the sail a good part of the day, and they camped in the evening at seven o'clock. On Friday, the last day of July, after a rainy night, they resumed the journey at nine, and continued until a quarter before eight, killing seven geese *en route*. Shoals and sand-banks prevented

Mackenzie from travelling along the west bank, which he desired to explore, particularly to ascertain what rivers came in from that direction. He had to cross over to the east side and ascend along that shore.

In the afternoon of the first day of August, which fell on a Saturday, Mackenzie landed at the Indian encampment six miles below the mouth of Great Bear River, and camped on the same ground he had occupied on July 5th. From the natives there he sought to obtain further information about the western river, but his interpreter, English Chief, seemed unwilling to ask the questions dictated by Mackenzie, who formed the opinion that this reluctance sprang from a fear lest, if satisfactory answers were received, another expedition would be at once undertaken, and the return to Athabasca postponed indefinitely. Mackenzie makes a note of the interesting fact that "This is the first night since our departure from Athabasca when it was sufficiently dark to render the stars visible."

The following morning progress was resumed, the men tracking as before. Mackenzie walked with the Indians, who advanced more rapidly than the men with the heavier canoes, because he suspected they wished to arrive at the next native settlement before him. Crossing Bear River in the Indians' small canoe, they continued walking until five in the afternoon, when they noticed several smokes ahead. Thinking they were approaching a camp of the natives, they hurried forward, but were not so engrossed as to overlook the strong sulphurous smell then prevailing, and at length they "discovered that the whole bank was on fire for a very considerable distance. It proved to be a coal mine, to which the fire had been communicated from an old Indian encampment. The beach was covered with coals." This was the same place Mackenzie had visited on the morning of July 5th, and had failed at that time to discover the origin of the smoke that had induced him to land there.

Ever since Mackenzie's journey on the "Grand River," as it was sometimes called, when he first noted the burning beds of coal and the salt deposits along its banks, the interest of geologists and prospectors has been aroused in its possibilities as a mineral-producing region. Its remoteness, the question of cheap transportation, and the labour problem have militated against its development, and its resources have been only cursorily investigated. What little is known of the potentialities of the district is the fruit of surveys made under the direction of the Geological Survey of Canada and the Topographical Surveys. Writing in his report of the information he had obtained respecting the economic minerals found in the Mackenzie Valley, Mr William Ogilvie, D.L.S., referring to the burning coal seen by Mackenzie, says: "About three and a half miles above Fort Norman, on the east bank of the river, two extensive exposures of lignite crop out. The upper one is overlaid by about fifty feet of clay and a few feet of friable sandstone, and is about fifteen feet thick. The other seam is probably forty feet below this. When I was there it was nearly all under water. It is said to be as thick as, if not thicker than, the upper one.

"The upper seam has been on fire for over one hundred years, as it was burning when Sir Alexander Mackenzie passed in 1789. The place is locally known as le Boucan. The fire extends at present about two miles along the river, not continuously but at intervals. When I passed it was burning in three or four places. After it has burned a certain distance into the seam the overlying mass of clay falls down, and to some extent suppresses the fire. This clay is in time baked into a red-coloured rock, in which are found innumerable impressions of leaves of plants. . . . Traces of this red rock were noticed on the bank fourteen miles below Fort Norman, but no trace of lignite was seen near it, having probably been all burned.

"The burning seam appears to be of poor quality, containing much shale and sand, which is converted by heat into scoriæ. It did not appear to me that it would be difficult to cut off all the burning places, and thus stop the further advance of the fire, which is destroying what yet may be of use. In order to find if the combustion could be checked I took a shovel at one place, and soon had all the burning coal for a short distance cut off completely, so that the fire ceased for a time at that spot. It is a pity that at least an attempt to put out the fire is not made. Many persons in that district have an idea that it is subterraneous, and that the seat of it cannot be reached. This is a mistake, as at the point mentioned I cleaned off the fire from the face of the seam to its base, and found underneath no sign of burning. The lower seam appears to be of better quality. . . ."

Arriving at the lodges they found them vacant. Well-beaten tracks a short distance away, and certain signs left by the natives, indicated they had gone in that direction, and Mackenzie sent one of the French Canadians and two Indians to see if they could find them. English Chief declined to go when requested, the first instance of refusing to do as the explorer desired. At a later hour the search party returned empty-handed, and the following morning the journey was resumed, but, beyond passing other native camps, the day's journey was without incident. On the 4th, 5th, and 6th their progress was much the same, tracking the first two days as before; but on the 6th a favourable aft wind enabled them to hoist the sail, and, with the aid of the paddles, much better headway was made.

Embarking at half-past three A.M. on Friday, 7th, they shot a reindeer that had apparently been attacked by wolves. The next day Mackenzie sent the hunters out for meat, but, after being absent all day, they returned without having secured anything. The forenoon of the

10th took them to a place opposite the mountains on which they had seen the patches of snow, taken for Spirit Stones by the Indians, on July 2nd. Mackenzie landed, and with one Indian set out to ascend one of the hills. Forcing a way through a thick forest growth of spruce, birch, and poplar, they came to more open ground covered with small pines, and this was succeeded by muskeg, in which Mackenzie sank up to his armpits. The marsh being impassable, he had to return to the river camp, reaching it at midnight, worn out with fatigue and without accomplishing his purpose.

As they had left their hunters on the other side of the river the day before, a traverse was made on the 11th to pick them up. When the men rejoined the canoes it was to bring a lean bag: they had killed only one beaver and a few hares. Having picked up his men, Mackenzie wished to return to the opposite side, with the hope of meeting with the natives whose tracks had been seen near their former camp. He desired English Chief to accompany him, but that worthy again proved reluctant, and for the same reason—viz., that Mackenzie might learn something that would send him off on a new exploration and they should be obliged to go with him. One of the Canadians told Mackenzie confidentially that English Chief, his wives, and followers intended to desert the party when they approached Great Slave Lake, in order to go to the country of the Beaver Indians. Notwithstanding English Chief's backwardness, the river was recrossed, but no sign of the Indians was found other than their tracks, and camp was made in the evening after they had added fifteen young geese to their larder.

On the 12th, Wednesday, renewed attempts were made to get in touch with the natives, but without any better success, although English Chief was again pressed into service by Mackenzie, and again showed the same hesitation to comply. This attitude of the fellow aroused

Mackenzie's ire, and the following day, August 13th, matters came to a head, an open rupture being narrowly averted. That morning they had passed several more recent camping-places of the natives, but of the people nothing whatever was seen. It may be that Mackenzie's opinion, that the natives deliberately avoided his party, was well founded. At seven in the morning they came to the island below Liard River where two bags of pemmican had been cached on the downward trip. This was recovered, and proved very acceptable. Shortly afterwards the smoke of an Indian camp was seen, and Mackenzie ordered a landing to be made as quickly as possible. Some of his men pursuing a flock of geese fired at the birds, and the reports so alarmed the natives that they hauled their canoes on shore and concealed themselves in the woods. It was found they had not only left their canoes, four in number, but other articles as well, which Mackenzie's Indians immediately proceeded to appropriate. Mackenzie rebuked English Chief for permitting the theft. That rebuke was the last straw. English Chief resented it, and told Mackenzie so in unmistakable terms. "This was the very opportunity which I wanted," declares the explorer, "to make him acquainted with my dissatisfaction for some time past." The vials of wrath were uncorked, and the contents poured out without stint. English Chief was told that he had concealed information that should have been disclosed to him, and that he had not looked after the natives as he should have done, and much more to the same purpose, all of which irritated the English Chief, who, after denying the charges levelled against him, expressed his determination not to accompany Mackenzie any farther, and that, though without ammunition, he could subsist as did the natives, and he would remain with them. This dispute set all his people agog with excitement. Lamentations loud and bitter filled the air. For two hours they indulged in this form of grief, and

then Mackenzie, who admits he could not well have done without them, soothed their sorrow, induced the chief to change his intention of abandoning him, and peace again prevailed. To remove any discontent, Mackenzie permitted his Indians to take most of the articles the natives had left behind in their flight, but in payment he left some cloth, several knives, and other articles. English Chief, still on his dignity, would not accept any of the things he and his fellows had coveted before the quarrel with Mackenzie. That night, however, after making camp near Liard River, Mackenzie invited English Chief to sup with him, and treated him to a "dram or two," which effectually dispelled the remnant of his heart-burning, and he took the precaution to present him with a further supply of spirits to carry to his lodge to prevent a recurrence of his chagrin.

During the two days following good progress was made, and on the third day, August 16th, they found the current so moderate that they advanced almost as rapidly as upon still water. Everything appeared to be running smoothly. Since the flare-up on the 13th there had been no further difficulty with any of the Indians, and every day's voyage was accomplished without dissension. On the 22nd, Saturday, the entrance to Great Slave Lake was reached, and the next day they entered it. Following the north-east shore, with the intention of visiting the spot where Mackenzie had left Le Roux, who had been instructed to remain there until the fall, on the afternoon of the 24th they encountered Le Roux himself, accompanied by an Indian and his family, in a canoe: they had been out for twenty-five days on a hunting excursion. Le Roux reported that he had visited Lac la Martre—a considerable sheet of water lying between Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake, and which is connected by a river flowing into the north arm of Great Slave Lake—and had there secured a quantity of skins from the Indians he had met there. High winds and rough seas rendered

progress slow and hazardous, and so alarmed the Indians that they announced their intention of not accompanying Mackenzie any farther. They nevertheless followed him to "M. Le Roux's house," later known as Fort Rae, where they all arrived on the afternoon of Sunday, 30th, one week after entering the lake. From the stores there Mackenzie paid the Indians who had been his fellow-voyagers with "a plentiful equipment of iron-ware, ammunition, tobacco, &c.," as a recompense for their services. He requested English Chief to visit the Beaver Indians and influence them to carry their furs to M. Le Roux, who would winter in the country at his post on the north shore of the lake.

After sitting up all night making arrangements for continuing the journey the next morning and preparing instructions for the guidance of M. Le Roux, farewells were exchanged at five o'clock A.M. on Monday, and Mackenzie set out to cross the lake to the south shore. Fort Resolution was reached at seven o'clock in the evening of Wednesday, September 2nd, Slave River the next day, and, in the afternoon of the 8th, the Portage des Noyes, where they camped. The following day they cleared the rapids, and repaired the canoe, which had been damaged in the process of portaging and ascending the river, the entire day being consumed in passing this dangerous place.

Falling in with a small party of Indians returning from a war expedition into a hostile country, one of whom was sick, Mackenzie had an opportunity to exercise his skill as a physician. "This man had conceived an idea," explains Mackenzie, "that the people with whom he had been at war had thrown medicine at him, which had caused his present complaint, and that he despaired of recovery. The natives are so superstitious that this idea alone was sufficient to kill him. Of this weakness I took advantage, and assured him that if he would never go to war with such poor defenceless people I would

cure him. To this proposition he readily consented, and on my giving him medicine, which consisted of Turlington's balsam mixed with water, I declared that it would lose its effect if he was not sincere in the promise that he made me. In short, he actually recovered, was true to his engagements, and on all occasions manifested his gratitude to me." It was by such means as this that Mackenzie paved the way for a good understanding with the Indians he encountered, and fostered amicable relations between them and the company he represented.

On September 12th Mackenzie entered the Lake of the Hills, and, a favourable wind enabling them to hoist sail, at three o'clock in the afternoon they reached Fort Chipewyan, where they found M'Leod, with five men, busily employed in building a new house. "Here," says Mackenzie—and there must have been a great sense of relief and satisfaction in his thoughts as well as his words —"here, then, we concluded this voyage, which had occupied the considerable space of one hundred and two days"—modest words, indeed, in which to chronicle the achievement that placed him in the front rank of explorers and discoverers, entitled to a niche in the hall of fame along with La Salle, Verendrye, Mungo Park, and the rest of the intrepid crew of discoverers.

In that one hundred and two days he had journeyed, from Fort Chipewyan to Whale Island and return, a distance of 2990 miles by canoe. The river from Fort Providence to Whale Island had never been explored before by a white man, nor had any individual native ever made the complete journey. Mackenzie River is one of the longest and broadest streams in the world, and drains an area of over six hundred and seventy thousand square miles. It is unique in that a large part of its basin is situated on the farther side of a great mountain chain, the Rockies, which traverse it for one thousand three hundred miles nearly. Two of its principal tributaries, the Liard and Peace Rivers, arise west of the

Rocky Mountains, which they pierce on their way to join the main stream. A third tributary, the Athabasca, the Elk River of the old traders, has its source and basin wholly east of the mountain range. Of these three tributaries the Peace is the longest and largest, whose principal branch, the Finlay, has its source in Lake Thudade in British Columbia. From Great Slave Lake, where Mackenzie's voyage of discovery really began, to the sea the Mackenzie is a noble imposing river, with an average width of one mile, with occasional expansions for long distances of twice that breadth. Clusters of islands occur in its channel at intervals all the way down, while the Rocky Mountains and other ranges that are spurs of the central series run parallel for part of its course. Its current in average stages of water has a velocity of four miles an hour, which is materially increased at the numerous rapids that mark its course.

The journey was one not to be lightly undertaken, and Mackenzie fully realised the dangers that lurked everywhere along the route and dogged his every footstep. There were not only the dangers provided by the river itself—rapids, shoals, submerged rocks, and snags,—but there were the territories of several tribes of Indians to be traversed—Indians who had never seen a white man, and some of them hostile to the natives he necessarily took with him as hunters and interpreters. There were dangers on shore from wild animals, and there was always the haunting spectre that has brought ruin and disaster to so many expeditions of discovery, starvation, to be provided against, not always an easy matter, even in a country where game is abundant. But all these dangers he faced and overcame. His treatment of the natives he encountered was most commendable. His great object was to make friends, to establish peaceful relations between the fur-traders and those who could furnish a continuous supply of furs, the commodity Mackenzie and his associates in business were desirous

of acquiring. That the river he had thus explored to its mouth, to the Arctic Sea itself, should be named after him—not by himself but by others who recognised the great service he had done to geographical knowledge—was only a fitting testimony to the value placed upon his achievement; and yet the task he so successfully accomplished in 1789 possessed only a tithe of the importance of what he had yet to perform—a task he had already set himself, to discover that western river that would carry him to the western sea.

CHAPTER V.

IN WINTER QUARTERS ON PEACE RIVER.

WHEN Mackenzie arrived at Fort Chipewyan it was to find its affairs had been well administered by his cousin, Roderick, who had during his absence been to head-quarters at Grande Portage. He had not heard anything said there in commendation of Alexander's expedition down the great river. The majority of the partners thought it a waste of time and energy that could have been better expended in promoting trade along the beaten channels. In short, they considered he was not acting loyally by his associates in thus indulging a desire to penetrate a region whence they did not expect any profit to come. Mackenzie felt this condemnation of his journey as only a sensitive earnest man can when he knows in his own conscience that he is not blameworthy. Perhaps some of the antagonism shown towards his exploit had its foundation in sheer jealousy. This unfriendly attitude towards his achievement in no wise deterred Mackenzie, however, from indulging in dreaming of future conquests of a similar character. There was always in his mind that western river of whose existence he had learned from the natives far down the Mackenzie. Something was known at that time of the exploits of Captain James Cook and of the Spaniards, but Captain Gray had not yet poked his inquisitive nose into the Columbia River; and of the streams that flowed into the Pacific Ocean, few had been discovered, and of those

few, little was known. Subconsciously Mackenzie was determined to search for that western river that would take him to the western sea.

In the spring of 1790 Alexander Mackenzie attended the gathering of partners at Grande Portage. Simon M'Tavish, sarcastically nicknamed "Le Marquis" and "Le Premier" by the traders because of his haughty dominating manner, complained of the insufficient number of furs sent down from the Athabasca district, thereby indulging in a fling at Mackenzie. No love was lost between the two men, and as time passed the antagonism became more pronounced, to end in open rupture in later years. Mackenzie did not stand alone in the feeling of antipathy towards M'Tavish, and he soon discovered that in that regard he was not lacking in support. He received no encouragement to prosecute further explorations, and his associates sought to cool his ardour and to gratify their envy by practically ignoring his voyage to the Arctic Ocean. Writing from Grande Portage on July 16th, 1790, to Roderick at Athabasca, he said: "My expedition was hardly spoken of, but that is what I expected." It seems difficult to comprehend such insufferable indifference to an exploit of such magnitude, but who can fathom the hidden workings of the human mind when jealousy and envy rule it!

Returning to Fort Chipewyan, he sent Roderick to Great Slave Lake. His own journey thither had convinced him of several things. One was the advisability of instituting some sort of tribal government under a ruling chief, the object of this being to organise that people under his nominee with a view to securing the whole of their catch of furs. He did not approve of the site selected by Le Roux on the northern arm of the lake, giving a preference for another on Mackenzie River, below the outlet of Great Slave Lake, at the mouth of Yellow Knife River. This fort was established in accordance with a promise he had given to the Yellow Knives

the previous year. Writing to Roderick Mackenzie on March 2nd, 1791, he said: "I hope you will make all possible enquiry regarding the country of the Beaver Indians as well as of the country of the Slaves, and more particularly regarding a great river which is reported to run parallel with and falls into the sea westward of the River in which I voyaged, and commit such information to paper." He still harboured the intention of one day setting out to find that river, even as Kim's old lama had always in mind the river he sought so diligently. Meanwhile he exerted himself to place his district on a sound business basis, and directed his energies to increase the sale of furs despatched to Lac la Pluie, for his own pecuniary recompense depended upon the revenue of the company, and the higher the returns the greater his share of the profits, and already he thought of the day when he would be able to withdraw from active service and enjoy the fruits of his industry.

A prophet hath no honour in his own country, it is said. Nor had Mackenzie received any honour in his own company for his long journey of discovery. What his associates failed to do, his rivals in trade acknowledged and determined to improve upon. The Hudson's Bay Company decided to emulate the example set by Mackenzie, and explore on their own account. All that was known of the Far West at that time was derived from the reports of Peter Pond and from the map he had prepared of the country. It was a map full of gross errors, but as it was the only map in existence showing the western region, it was accepted as reasonably accurate. So far from being so, it was misleading. It showed the distance between Hudson's Bay and Lake Athabasca as much greater than it is, and, with Captain Cook's observations giving the position of the north-west coast of the Pacific, and the position of Hudson's Bay being already known, the result was an impression that the distance between Lake Athabasca and the Pacific was

very short, less than two hundred miles. The Hudson's Bay Company determined to forestall any attempt on the part of Mackenzie or any other Nor'-Wester to traverse the intervening space, and thus open up to their own trade the unknown western country. To this end they sent out from England Philip Turner to conduct the expedition to the Pacific. (Note D.) In this undertaking the Hudson's Bay Company had the endorsation of the British Government, then feeling some faint desire to acquire information respecting the boundaries of their possessions in North America. The mode of travel, the mode of living, and everything connected with such an expedition as Turner was deputed to undertake, were new to him. He experienced difficulty at every step, and when he reached Fort Chipewyan in 1791 he no doubt rejoiced to find that the observations he took there precluded the necessity of his proceeding farther for the purpose of settling the question of its geographical position. Alexander Mackenzie was on his way east when he heard of this expedition, and he promptly wrote to Roderick Mackenzie at Fort Chipewyan, bidding him to extend hospitality to the members of the expedition. Later he fell in with Turner in person, and again writing to his cousin he informed him that "I find the intention of the expedition is discoveries only. I also find the party ill-prepared for the undertaking." He had nothing to fear in that quarter. None knew better than he the need for preparedness. He knew some, at least, of his own shortcomings in that respect, and wished to remedy them.

Mackenzie had felt, while on the journey down the Mackenzie River and the return voyage, his lack of astronomical knowledge, and the want of reliable instruments for taking observations. He realised the importance of being able to state in precise terms the geographical position of any point he might visit. He had been hampered on his northern expedition because of his inability

to make his records come up to the standard he desired them to possess, and he determined to so prepare himself for his next excursion that there would be no further grounds for reproach on that score. Not that he had altogether failed in ascertaining his position with fair accuracy. It would be better to say, perhaps, that, considering his lack of proper training, he had made his observations with remarkable ability. Nevertheless he was not content with his performance.

It was while journeying towards Grande Portage that he fell in with Turner. Continuing to the portage, after a short sojourn there he pushed on to Montreal. Writing to Roderick from Fort Vauligny on August 10th, 1791, he told his cousin that "I have some idea of crossing the ocean, but this I cannot determine at present. However, it is my determination, if I live and be in health, to meet you next spring at Lac la Pluie. Though my absence may be short, I can assure you that I leave my friends in this country with much pain."

It is not difficult to glean from those words that he had fully made up his mind to go to England unless some unforeseen circumstance forbade it. A man of his disposition does not lightly relinquish an idea once it has become fixed in his mind. He received no encouragement from his business associates. Doubtless they threw cold water upon his proposal to cross the ocean for the purpose he had in view. They were more concerned in making money through the medium of furs than interested in accuracy of observations to ascertain latitude and longitude. In spite of everything, Mackenzie made the voyage across the Atlantic. Sinking his natural pride, laying aside for the time being his rôle of leader, he became a learner, a pupil, and set himself the task of acquiring the knowledge in which he was at his own valuation deficient. Applying his energies to learn a sufficient amount of astronomy and mathematics, he soon absorbed all that was requisite. He purchased

instruments, and practised their use until he became proficient in handling them. Then, when he had done this to his own satisfaction, in the spring of 1792 he took ship bound for Montreal, and hastened back to his post at Fort Chipewyan.

During the winter of 1791-92, perhaps before he sailed for England, he had sent word to Roderick at Lake Athabasca to despatch men up the Peace River to cut and prepare timber for the erection there of a house in which Mackenzie intended to spend the following winter, his intention being to make that the base from which he would set out on his next exploration, for he had never for one moment abandoned the hope of searching for and finding that great river west of the Rocky Mountains. All that summer of 1792 at Fort Chipewyan he made his preparations, but never neglecting the business of the trader and bourgeois. Early in October everything was ready, and on the 10th he bade Roderick Mackenzie good-bye, and left the fort for the Peace River. In the modest language in which his journals are couched, he refers to his departure and purpose in the following characteristic sentences: "Having made every necessary preparation, I left Fort Chipewyan to proceed up the Peace River. I had resolved to go as far as our most distant settlement, which would occupy the remaining part of the season, it being the route by which I proposed to attempt my next discovery, across the mountains from the source of that river; for whatever distance I could reach this fall would be a proportionate advancement of my voyage."

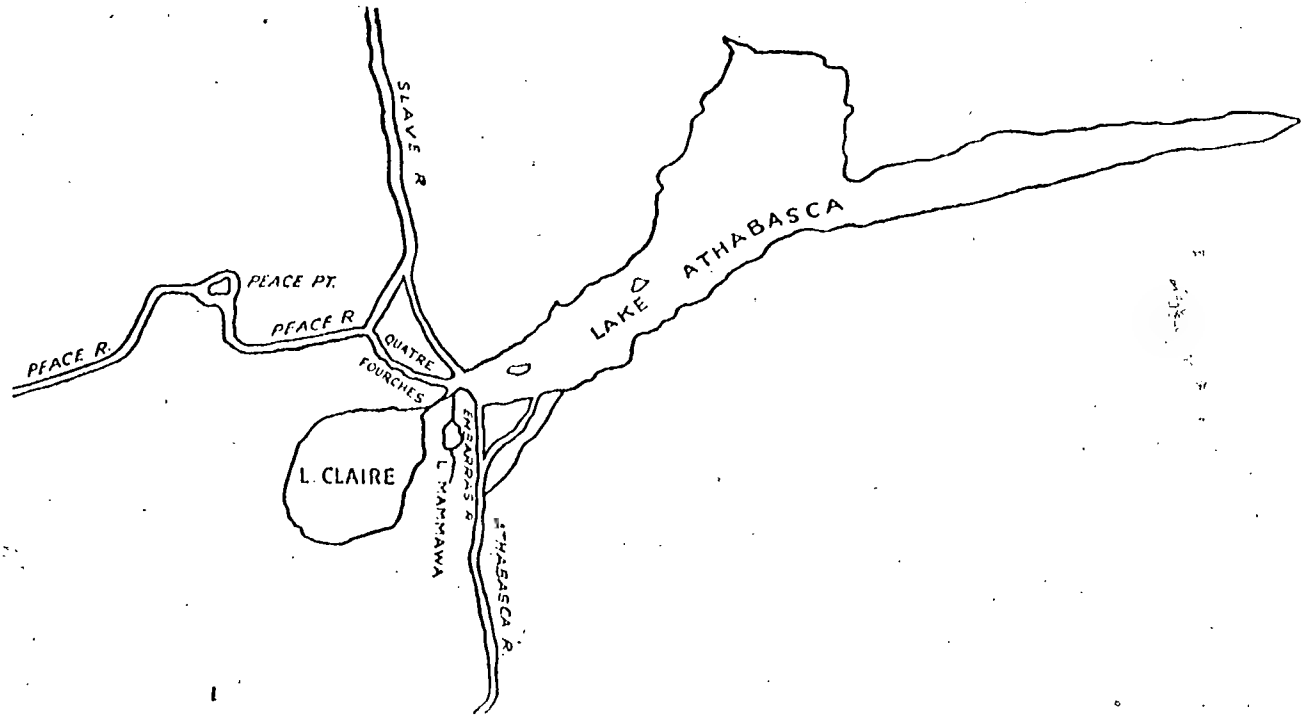
He took with him, in addition to his own canoe, two canoes laden with supplies, and an unstated number of men. Several days in advance of this party, James Finlay the younger had departed from Fort Chipewyan with men and goods for the new establishment, which had been placed under his care and was situated farther up the Peace River than the old establishment to

which Mackenzie had despatched Boyer four years before.

Entering Peace River by one of its several outlets, which he names Pine River, and which others call Quatre Fourches River, on October 12th, 1792, the ascent of that stream was begun. Between Embarras River, one of the mouths of the Athabasca River emptying into Athabasca Lake, and the northerly mouth of the Peace where it flows into Peace River, lies an extensive delta, including Lake Claire (Clear Water Lake) and Lake Mamawa (Mackenzie's Lake Vassieu) and the marshes bordering thereon, and all that part of the Peace River valley below Peace Point. The delta is composed of alluvial soil washed down by the rivers into Lake Athabasca, which at that westerly end has been thus silted up. The river, or more correctly rivers, known as the Quatre Fourches, the Four Forks or Branches, comprise one discharging from Lake Claire into Lake Athabasca, one from Lake Athabasca to Slave River, one from Peace River into Slave River, and the fourth, between Athabasca Lake and Peace River, either discharging into Peace River from the lake, or, in the spring, flowing from Peace River into the lake. It was presumably up the latter that Mackenzie ascended to reach Peace River.

On the 13th he reached Peace Point, where the Beaver Indians were wont to hold peace parleys with their enemies, and from which circumstance the river derives its name. Passing Boulder Rapids, or Rapid Bouillé, without finding it worthy of mention, Mackenzie reached the Chutes, two miles above Little Red River, the one obstacle in an otherwise navigable waterway for a distance of nine hundred miles from the mouth of Peace River to Rocky Mountain Portage. From the camp fires observed at the portage past the falls and rapids of the Chutes, Mackenzie concluded that the Finlay party could not be far in advance. That night it snowed.

Having made the portages, the first of eight hundred



JUNCTION OF ATHABASCA, PEACE, AND SLAVE RIVERS.

yards, and the second, a mile farther up-stream, about five hundred yards, on the preceding afternoon, on the 18th the journey was resumed. Loon (Wabiskaw) River was passed before noon, and that night they camped at Grand Isle. Leaving there at three o'clock in the morning of the 19th, five hours' paddling against the current took them to "Old Establishment," established by Boyer in 1788. This site is near the present Fort Vermilion. "Our people ahead slept here last night, and from their carelessness," he writes, "the fire was communicated to and burned down the large house, and was proceeding fast to the smaller buildings when we arrived to extinguish it."

As the route up to that point, Old Establishment, had been surveyed by M. Vaudrieul, or Vaudreuil, formerly in the service of the North-West Company, and who was at Fort Chipewyan in 1789, Mackenzie does not enlarge upon it in his notes. After putting out the fire and travelling a further thirty-six miles, they came upon "Mr Finlay with his canoes, who was encamped near the fort of which he was going to take charge during the ensuing winter, and made every necessary preparative for a becoming appearance on our arrival the following morning. Although I had been since 1787 in the Athabasca country, I had never yet seen a native of that part of it which we had now reached.

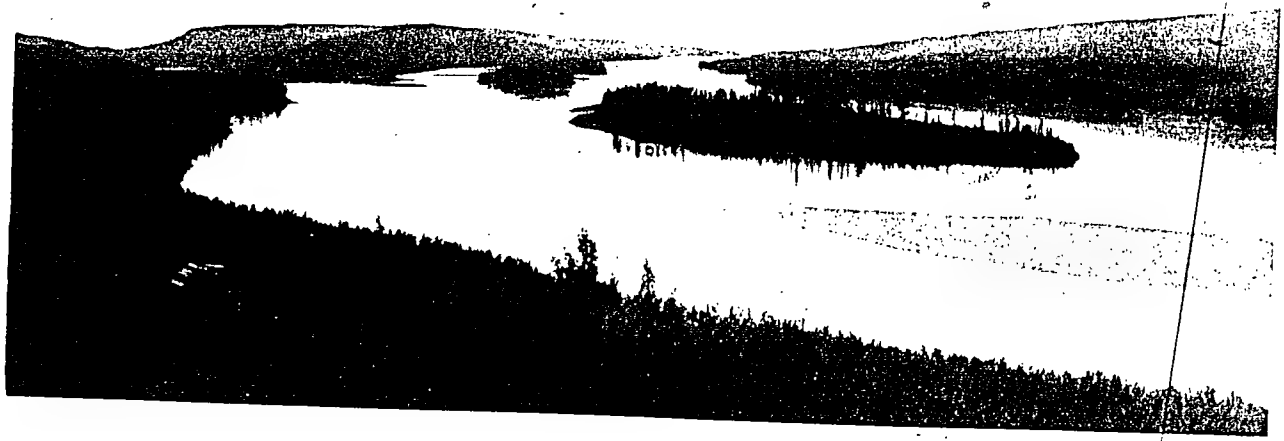
"At six o'clock in the morning of the 20th we landed before the house amidst the rejoicing and firing of the people, who were animated with the prospect of again indulging themselves, in the luxury of rum, of which they had been deprived since the beginning of May, as it is the practice throughout the North-West neither to sell or give any rum to the natives during the summer. . . . As they very soon expressed their desire of the expected regale, I called them together, to the number of forty-two hunters, or men capable of bearing arms, to offer some advice, which would be equally advantageous

to them and to us, and I strengthened my admonition with a nine-gallon cask of reduced rum and a quantity of tobacco. At the same time I observed that, as I should not often visit them, I had instanced a greater degree of liberality than they had been accustomed to." And yet they say the Scots have no sense of humour!

The nights were so cold, and ice formed on the river to such an extent and thickness, that his men began to fear they might not be able to continue the journey, and Mackenzie realised that he could not afford to tarry by the wayside. Accordingly he sent the laden canoes on ahead, and on the 23rd, two days later, he followed. Arriving at the junction of the Smoky River and the Peace, they continued along the latter for six miles, and landed on November 1st at the place which had been selected for the site of their winter quarters, the men being thoroughly exhausted by their exertions in forcing a passage through the fast-forming ice. "Nor," says Mackenzie in his journal, "were their labours at an end, for there was not a single hut to receive us. It was, however, now in my power to feed and sustain them in a more comfortable manner."

The two men who had been sent there in the early part of the season were on hand with about seventy Indians to receive the travellers, which they did with repeated volleys and manifestations of joy. No sooner was his tent pitched than Mackenzie proceeded to lecture the natives, after he had first taken the precaution to give each of them "about four inches of Brazil tobacco, a dram of spirits, and lighted the pipe." He told them he would treat them with kindness if they behaved themselves, but, as he had heard how troublesome they had been to his predecessor, he would deal severely with them if they failed of their duty to him. A gift of rum and more tobacco, as a token of peace, ended the ceremony.

Mackenzie found that the men despatched for the purpose had prepared all the timber for the house, and the



Junction of Peace and Smoky Rivers.

palisades for the stockade, eighteen feet long and seven inches in diameter, to enclose a square of a hundred and twenty feet. Occupied in settling matters with the Indians, fitting them out for the winter hunt, it was not until November 7th that Mackenzie could devote time to house-building. On that date he set all hands to work on the house, store-houses, and stockade.

On the 22nd the Peace River froze over, the Smoky having already been frozen about a week, and on the 28th the temperature dropped to sixteen degrees below zero. The house-building proceeded daily despite the severity of the weather, and on December 23rd Mackenzie left his tent and took up his abode in the house. He then set the men at building their own quarters, materials for five cabins, seventeen by twelve feet, being already collected. Mackenzie found the Indians wholly lacking in the knowledge of the medicinal properties of the plant life with which they were surrounded, and he reports how he was called upon to assume the rôle of physician and surgeon. One of his patients was a native woman with an inflamed breast, which had been treated by lacerating it with flints. Mackenzie effected a cure by cleanliness, poulticing, and the application of a healing salve. One of his men injured his thumb, lymphangitis followed, and septicæmia threatened. Mackenzie saved his life by a timely letting of blood. Still another case he successfully managed was that of a young Indian whose hand had been badly injured by the bursting of a gun. The wound was in an offensive state from neglect, and part of it was sloughing. Mackenzie cleansed it and applied a poultice of spruce bark. He wished to cut away the thumb, which was hanging by a shred of flesh, but the patient would not consent, and Mackenzie applied "vitriol" (probably blue stone, sulphate of copper) to it until it shrivelled to a thread, and was easily got rid of. The application of a salve made of Canada balsam, wax, and tallow dropped from a burning candle into

water, healed the sore, much to the delight of the young warrior.

New Year's Day, 1793, was ushered in at this remote post in conformity with the usual custom of the traders. Mackenzie was aroused from sleep by the discharge of firearms at daybreak, and the customary expressions of goodwill were exchanged. In return they were treated with plenty of spirits and cakes, as so many of the traders were Scots; but little attention was paid to Christmas Day at the various trading posts, in conformity with the rule that obtains in Scotland, where it is not uncommon to find business carried on, on the festival of the Nativity, much the same as on any other day, while on New Year's Day a general holiday prevails, and the occasion is one of rejoicing. Mackenzie makes no mention of Christmas whatever, but does not neglect the first day of January.

Among those who were gathered about the new fort were two "Rocky Mountain Indians," who informed Mackenzie that "that part of the river that intervenes between this place and the mountains bear much the same appearance as that around us . . . but that the course of the latter (the river) is interrupted, near and in the mountains, by successive rapids and considerable falls," and this information the explorer found in due course to be absolutely correct. "These men also informed me that there is another great river towards the mid-day sun, whose current runs in that direction, and that the distance from it is not great across the mountains." From these men, therefore, Mackenzie received the first inkling of the existence of the Fraser River.

The weather, which had been quite bearable until then, became extremely cold with the advent of February —so cold was it on the night of the 2nd of that month that Mackenzie's watch stopped, "a circumstance which had never happened to this watch since my residence in the country." The cold continued unabated until March 16th, when a Chinook wind brought with it milder weather,

and on April 1st the hunters shot five wild geese. By the 5th the snow had entirely disappeared, and on the 20th mosquitoes began to annoy. The river, however, was still ice-bound, and Mr Mackay gathered a bouquet of pink flowers. On the 25th the river was free of ice.

During the winter an Indian, rejoicing in the name of White Partridge, was murdered by one of Mackenzie's native hunters; the cause confirmed the accuracy of the belief held in some quarters that to discover the reason for a crime of that sort, *cherchez la femme*. The murderer and his victim had been close friends for several years. The former had three wives, and White Partridge becoming enamoured of one of them, his friend very generously resigned her to him. After three years had gone by the husband suddenly became jealous, and the relations between the woman and White Partridge were publicly suspended, but the couple met clandestinely. The affair ended in the killing of White Partridge. The important phase of this occurrence was that for a time it threatened to wreck all Mackenzie's plans.

Now a sober Indian would feel degraded if he indulged in tears, but if drunk he may do so without any qualms of conscience. White Partridge's friends sent to Mackenzie for rum, upon which to attain that state of intoxication that would permit them to give proper expression to their grief for the deceased. Mackenzie promptly refused, whereupon they threatened to go to war. Had they done so, Mackenzie would have been deprived of assistance upon which he had relied, and the company would have been deprived of a number of hunters and trappers, and have suffered a diminution in the pack of furs from that quarter. There was nothing for Mackenzie to do, therefore, "from motives of interest as well as humanity," as he candidly stated, but to capitulate when a second deputation of "persons of some weight among those people" came to repeat the request. He stipulated, however, "that they would continue peaceably at home."

During the month of April, Mackenzie had been occupied in trading with the Indians, and, in preparation for his own western journey and the despatch of a part of his men to Fort Chipewyan with the furs he had purchased, he had caused the old canoes to be repaired and four new ones constructed. He had also engaged his hunters, and when all these matters had been satisfactorily set in train, he devoted himself to writing his business and private correspondence. On May 8th he sent six canoes, loaded with furs and carrying letters, to Chipewyan.

On January 10th, 1793, he wrote a letter to Roderick, but whether he sent it then or deferred doing so until May is not clear. A portion of it has reference to his prospective voyage of discovery in the following terms: "I have not been able to obtain any certain information thus far respecting the country behind this. I was thinking that if Mackay could be spared, he would be of great service to me should I undertake the opening of a route by Lac des Carriboux; I would take Finlay, but he is of a weak constitution."

Now that he was despatching a brigade to Lake Athabasca, he again wrote to his cousin:—

"FORKS PEACE RIVER,
8th May 1793.

"DEAR RORY,—I have been so vexed and disturbed of late that I cannot sit down to anything steadily. The Indians in general have disappointed me in their hunt. I have had great trouble to procure young men to accompany me in my expedition; none of them like it. I at last prevailed on three. A fourth was desirous to go, but I would not take him, and, to be revenged, he induced my guide to run away, and both have disappeared last evening. The two remaining Indians know no more of the country than I do myself, and it may be that they are on the eve of following the example of the others, for no dependence can be put on the promise of any of these people. Without Indians I have little hopes of success.

"The guide who deserted me was acquainted with another

large river to the westward of this, at the distance of two days' march, but the difficulty is to find that river out. At any rate, we are too far advanced in the undertaking not to make the attempt. . . . I never was so undecided in my intentions as this year regarding my going to the Portage or remaining inland. I weighed everything in my mind over and over again, and cannot find that my opponents there can do me any injury without running the risk of impairing their own interest; therefore I ought to fear nothing on that score. . . . With this weight on my mind, and my desire to mix in the business at Grand Portage, I would not have remained inland had I any intention of continuing in the country beyond the ensuing winter.

"Should I be successful, I shall retire with great advantage; if not, I cannot be worse off than I am at present. I begin to think it is the height of folly in a man to reside in a country of this kind, deprived of every comfort that can render life agreeable, especially when he has a competency to enjoy life in a civilised society, which ought to be the case with me."

On the 9th, the day after the above was written, he wrote this significant sentence to Roderick: "I send you a couple of guineas; the rest I take with me to traffic with the Russians." It is apparent from this that Mackenzie expected to reach the Russian trading post which the Hare and Dog-rib Indians had told him, in 1789, existed at the mouth of the great river of the west. It would appear, therefore, that Mackenzie's quest was for that river, which he believed to be Cook's River (in reality the Yukon), when he left the quarters near Smoky River on May 9th, 1793, the day after he had despatched the canoes laden with furs for Fort Chipewyan.

It was the custom of the fur-traders to begin a journey towards the close rather than the beginning of the day, and it is probable that the laden canoes that set out on the 8th did not leave the post until late in the afternoon. They would descend the river for a few miles and then

encamp, the object being to gradually separate themselves from the neighbourhood of their friends and associates; while apart from them, they were still within measurable distance and easy reach. Doubtless, Mackenzie sent his letter dated the 9th by special courier to overtake the homeward-bound party at their first camping-place, which would perhaps not be more than five or six miles distant.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM FORKS FORT TO FRASER RIVER.

AT seven o'clock in the evening of Thursday, May 9th, 1793, Alexander Mackenzie left Forks Fort, and began the memorable voyage which took him to the Pacific Ocean. After proceeding up the Peace River for less than three miles, camp was made for the night. The expedition consisted of ten men, including himself. His companions were Alexander Mackay, his lieutenant, an experienced capable man, who had arrived at Fort Chipewyan a few weeks before Mackenzie left there for the Peace River; two Indians as hunters and interpreters; and six French-Canadians—Joseph Landry, Charles Ducette, Francois Beaulieux, Baptist Bisson, Francois Courtois, and Jacques Beauchamp. The two first-named, Landry and Ducette, had accompanied him on his voyage down the Mackenzie to the Arctic Ocean. They took with them provisions, goods for presents, arms, ammunition, and baggage to the amount of three thousand pounds in weight—and a dog. The craft in which the ten men and the freight were bestowed was a birch bark canoe twenty-five feet long, four feet nine inches beam, and twenty-six inches deep—so light that two men could carry it on a good trail three or four miles without having to stop to rest. To take care of the fort and supply the Indians with ammunition during the summer, he left two men, who shed tears in anticipation of the dangers their friends were about to encounter,

while Mackenzie's companions offered up their prayers for a safe return.

It seems odd that Mackenzie should have taken a dog with him on this expedition, considering the necessity of carefully husbanding their food-supply; and a dog requires a good deal of food. There is, however, a good deal to be said for the companionship of a dog. Captain Butler found it so when he followed in Mackenzie's footsteps eighty years afterwards, across the Rocky Mountains and as far as the forks of the Peace River. It does not transpire that Mackenzie's dog served any particular purpose, either for hunting or as guardian during the watches of the night, and it is possible that the animal was a pet, and nothing more, that Mackenzie did not care to leave behind.

During his sojourn at his winter residence Mackenzie had taken several observations to ascertain the position of the fort, which he found to be 56° 9′ N. latitude and 117° 35′ 15″ W. longitude. More recent observations give the latitude as 56° 30′ and longitude 119° 15′. In 1802 David Thompson visited "The Forks" fort, and gave its latitude identical with that given by Mackenzie.

On Friday, the 10th—perhaps Mackenzie started on Thursday to avoid the calamities that beginning a journey on a Friday is alleged to entail—the westward-bound travellers embarked at a quarter-past three in the morning, the morning being bright, clear, and sharp; but about noon a landing had to be made to gum the canoe, which had sprung a leak owing to the heavy load. Mackenzie took advantage of the delay to make an observation, and fixed his position as latitude 55° 58′ 48″. Upon resuming the journey, they had not gone more than a mile and a half when Mackenzie dropped his pocket compass overboard.

Mackenzie was most favourably impressed by the country through which the river runs above Smoky River, and he committed his impressions to paper. "From the

place which we quitted this morning (10th), the west side of the river displayed a succession of the most beautiful scenery I had ever beheld. The ground rises at intervals to a considerable height, and stretching inwards to a considerable distance. At every interval or pause in the rise there is a very gently ascending space or lawn, which is alternate with abrupt precipices to the summit of the whole, or, at least, as far as the eye could distinguish. This magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it. Groves of poplars in every shape vary the scene, and the intervals are enlivened with vast herds of elks and buffaloes, the former choosing the steeps and uplands, and the latter preferring the plains. At this time the buffaloes were attended with their young ones, who were frisking about them; and it appeared that the elks would soon exhibit the same enlivening circumstance. The whole country displayed an exuberant verdure: the trees that bear a blossom were advancing fast to that delightful appearance, and the velvet rind of their branches reflecting the oblique rays of a rising or setting sun, added a splendid gaiety to the scene, which no expressions of mine are qualified to describe." This vivid word-picture of the passing scene shows that, besides being a good man of business, he was gifted with a poetic sense that must have served him well during his lonely wanderings.

The Peace was rising, beginning to respond to the spring freshet, and the current so gained in strength that poling served their advance better than the paddles. On the 11th, facing a head wind, they embarked again at four o'clock A.M., and, to lighten the overladen canoe, all the fresh meat that their hunters had secured the evening before, the flesh of an elk, was left behind, save that already put in the pot. After proceeding between six and seven miles, Mackenzie took an observation, and found his position to be 55° 55′ 3″ N. latitude.

Three miles beyond the whole prairie was on fire, and the head wind so violent, filling the canoe, that the party landed for a respite. A short distance farther on they fell in with a Beaver chief and companions on a hunting expedition. Mackenzie, with seasonable discretion, did not camp there, fearing that his Indians might be discouraged from continuing with him. Fate was unkind to him on this occasion, for several of the Beavers, running along the river banks to keep up with the canoe, maintained a conversation with his men, who became so absorbed in the verbal exchange that they ran the canoe on a rock, necessitating a landing for repairs, and camp was made for the night. Mackenzie's two hunters paid a visit to the camp of the Beavers, whose chief, accompanied by another man, came to Mackenzie and told a bad luck story of a shortage of tobacco and ammunition. The trader promptly referred them to the fort near Smoky River, where they could obtain an abundance of either, or both, "if they were active and industrious" in obtaining furs. The chief suggested that Mackenzie should allow him the use of the canoe to carry himself and family across the river. As this was not altogether to Mackenzie's liking, he was momentarily at a loss to know what excuse to make without giving offence, and happily ventured the opinion that inasmuch as the canoe was destined to carry him and his men on a voyage of much consequence, no woman could be permitted to enter it. The chief immediately concurred in this, and returned to his own camp, quite satisfied with a present of tobacco. It was this resourcefulness in dealing with the natives that enabled Mackenzie to maintain amicable relations with them under trying conditions. Some of the chief's party spent the night in Mackenzie's camp, and from them he learned that it would take ten days to reach the mountains. Mackenzie's hunters returned to his camp on Sunday, 12th, morning, but when they dressed themselves in the clothing given

to them before leaving the Forks, he feared that they had "some latent design," probably desertion.

That day they killed an elk, and when they camped for the night on an island they were again visited by Indians, the greater part of whom were what Mackenzie called Rocky Mountain Indians.

He sought to obtain some useful information from them, but they all pleaded ignorance of the country lying beyond the first mountain, but this ignorance did not hinder them from alleging that the rapids would prevent the travellers from attaining their object. Mackenzie had expected to find with this band of natives an old man who had on a previous occasion given him some information about the country they were about to enter, and who had advised the trader to take the southern branch of the river when he came to the forks beyond the mountains, and from which a portage of a day's march would take him to another large river; and to show his good faith he promised that his son, who had accompanied him to the river referred to, should go with him as guide. This son was the guide who had deserted from the fort at the Forks on the eve of the departure of the expedition. Mackenzie now asked about this old man, but to his disappointment learned that he was absent, and not likely to return for a month.

On Monday morning, 13th, to Mackenzie's surprise, the Indian who had induced the proposed guide to desert at the Forks now presented himself, and offered to go in his place. His offer was not accepted, because he knew nothing whatever of the distant country. Mackenzie would have liked nothing better than to have administered a sound chastisement to the rascal, but feared that should he do so it might result in his two hunters being seduced from their allegiance, and they were too essential to him to run the risk of losing them. As quickly as he could get the camp moving, the journey was resumed, much to the chagrin of his hunters, who had

urged him to spend the day there. In the course of the afternoon an observation gave their position as 56° 17′ 44″ N. On the 14th he again took an altitude, and worked out the position as 56° 1′ 19″ N. Two and a half miles beyond the spot where he made the observation he passed what he terms Bear River, which "falls in from the east." This is the present Beatton River.

On Thursday, 16th, he observed "a considerable river which discharged itself by several streams," called Sinew River, which is now named Pine River. It is one hundred yards wide in its lower part. Mackenzie remarks: "This spot would be an excellent situation for a fort or factory, as there is plenty of wood, and every reason to believe that the country abounds in beaver." A few years later, at the junction of the Peace and Pine, Fort St John was originally placed, and there remained until 1874, when a new fort was built on the south bank of Peace River, fifteen miles above the confluence with Pine River. When David Thompson ascended the Peace from Smoky River in 1804 he visited Fort St John, which he called Rocky Mountain House, which is not to be confused with the Rocky Mountain House at Hudson's Hope, established by Simon Fraser in 1805. In 1823 the Sekenais Indians attacked the original Fort St John, and killed several men engaged there. This caused the abandonment of the fort for fifty years, when it was rebuilt in the new position. Still later it was again moved, this time to the north bank of the Peace, its present situation.

That night, 16th, they camped at seven o'clock. "The land above the spot where we encamped spreads into an extensive plain," remarks Mackenzie. "The country is so crowded with animals as to have the appearance, in some places, of a stall-yard." Under such conditions of abundant game, Mackay and one of the men killed two elk and mortally wounded a buffalo.

It froze that night, and the air was quite sharp when they embarked on the 17th. At two in the afternoon

the Rocky Mountains came into view, their summits covered with snow, and that day they ascended several rapids. That night it again froze hard.

Embarking at four o'clock in the morning of the 18th, they had not gone two hundred yards before they had to put to shore again to repair damage to the canoe, and later in the afternoon they ran on a snag, necessitating a further landing for repairs, two hours being lost on that occasion. Then a storm broke, and compelled them to make camp for the night at six o'clock. The current during the day increased in velocity; so strong was it that the following, Mackenzie, Mackay, and the two hunters, landed in order to lighten the canoe. Climbing the hills, they soon found a beaten path made by deer and buffalo which forded the river thereabouts. They soon fell in with a herd of buffalo, but Mackenzie would not allow the hunters to shoot them lest the report of firearms might alarm any Indians who might be in the vicinity, some of whom he daily expected to encounter. "Our dog," however, was sent after them, and brought down a calf. While the hunters were skinning the animal two gun reports were heard, and Mackenzie immediately answered by a similar signal. This was followed by another report, and Mackenzie and his companions hastened down to the river, where they learned that the canoe was at the foot of a strong rapid with falls beyond, and that a portage would be necessary. These were the first rapids of which the Indians had warned Mackenzie.

The voyageurs wanted to make a portage, but Mackenzie, with the daring that formed part of his nature, decided otherwise, and how the passage was effected cannot be better related than by quoting his own words: "The account which had been given me of the rapids was perfectly correct, though by crossing to the other side, I must acknowledge with some risk in such a heavy-laden canoe, the river appeared to me to be practicable as far as we could see; the traverse, therefore, was

attempted, and proved successful. We now towed the canoe along an island, and proceeded without any considerable difficulty till we reached the extremity of it, when the line could no longer be employed; and in endeavouring to clear the point of the island, the canoe was driven with such violence on a stony shore as to receive considerable injury. We now employed every exertion in our power to repair the breach that had been made, as well as to dry such articles of our loading as more immediately required it. We then transported the whole across the point, when we reloaded, and continued our course about three-quarters of a mile. We could now proceed no farther on this side of the water, and the traverse was rendered extremely dangerous, not only from the strength of the current but by the cascades just below us, which, if we got among them, would have involved us and the canoe in one common destruction. We had no other alternative than to return by the same course we came, or to hazard the traverse, the river on this side being bounded by a range of steep overhanging rocks, beneath which the current was driven on with resistless impetuosity from the cascades. Here are several small islands of solid rock, covered with a small portion of verdure, which have been worn away by the constant force of the current, and occasionally, as I presume, of ice at the water's edge, so as to be reduced in that part to one-fourth the extent of the upper surface, presenting, as it were, so many large tables, each of which was supported by a pedestal of a more circumscribed projection. . . . By crossing from one to the other of these islands we came at length to the main traverse, on which we ventured, and were successful in our passage. Mr Mackay and the Indians, who observed our manœuvres from the top of a rock, were in continual alarm for our safety." It is noteworthy that Mackenzie and the voyageurs alone risked their lives in this undertaking. The Indians, for whose safety the explorer was

always more concerned than for his own, were sent out of danger's way. He never sent his men to do anything that he would not undertake himself.

Difficult and dangerous as had been this proceeding, as bad and worse still confronted them. Using a sixty-fathom line, the canoe was towed up the swift water on the west side until farther progress was impossible, and a portage of a hundred and twenty paces had to be made. When the canoe was reloaded, Mackenzie and some of the men ascended the river bank and watched the voyageurs toiling below them. "My present situation," says Mackenzie, "was so elevated that the men, who were coming up a strong point, could not hear me, though I called to them with the utmost strength of my voice to lighten the canoe of part of its lading. And here I could not but reflect, with infinite anxiety, on the hazard of my enterprise. One false step of those attached to the line, or the breaking of the line itself, would have at once consigned the canoe, and everything it contained, to instant destruction. It, however, ascended the rapid in perfect security, but new dangers immediately presented themselves, for stones, both small and great, were continually rolling from the bank, so as to render the situation of those who were dragging the canoe beneath it extremely perilous; besides, they were at every step in danger, from the steepness of the ground, of falling into the water; nor was my solicitude diminished by my being necessarily removed at times from the sight of them."

Travelling through the forest, Mackenzie came to an enclosure made by the Indians for the capture of elk. Reaching the river again after tramping for some hours, he was perturbed by not seeing any sign of the canoe. He sent Mackay back to ascertain the reason of the delay, while he continued on for a mile and a half to examine the river still farther ahead, and "came to a part where the river washes the feet of lofty precipices,

and presented, in the form of rapids and cascades, a succession of difficulties to our navigation." As the canoe still did not come, Mackenzie retraced his steps to where he had parted from Mackay, and then to his satisfaction saw his men carrying the canoe over a rocky point. "Their difficulties had been great indeed, and the canoe had been broken; but they had persevered with success, and, having passed the carrying-place, we proceeded with the line as far as I had already been."

A man sent forward to make an examination of the river returned at nightfall with the report that it would be impracticable to pass several points. The following morning, however, they set out, and "with infinite difficulty passed along the foot of a rock, which, fortunately, was not a hard stone, so that we were enabled to cut steps in it for the distance of twenty feet, from which, at the hazard of my life, I leaped," says Mackenzie, "on a small rock below, where I received those who followed me on my shoulders. In this manner four of us passed and dragged up the canoe, in which attempt we broke her."

A dry tree provided fuel for a fire, over which they melted the pitch for the repair of the canoe, and, to prepare for future needs, two men were sent to procure a further supply of birch bark. When the canoe was ready the journey was resumed, progress being made by poling and towing. A traverse being found necessary at a place where the water was very rapid, some of the men stripped to their shirts that they might be better prepared for swimming in case of accident, but the crossing was made without other mishap than that of shipping of water. Mackenzie took an observation, and found the latitude to be 56° N., which, he remarks in his journal, "has since been proved to be tolerably correct." Continuing up-stream, the velocity of the current increased, and in two miles they had to unload and portage four times, and at five o'clock in the afternoon they

came to where the river was one continuous rapid. Again unloading, the canoe was towed with much difficulty and danger until, a wave striking the bow, the line parted, the canoe swept away, and the men in it faced what all thought certain death. For a moment it seemed that the expedition would come to an abortive end then and there, but another wave drove the frail craft into an eddy, where it was seized upon by eager hands and taken ashore. As far as could be seen ahead of them, the river was one white sheet of foaming water.

The perils and dangers they had met with, and the toil and labour of overcoming almost insurmountable obstacles, did not fail to affect the spirits of the men. They began to murmur, to whisper among themselves that it was useless to proceed, that they would be obliged to return to their starting-point. Mackenzie dealt with the malcontents in a way peculiarly his own: he bade them exert themselves in climbing the high river-bank and camp there for the night. While they were thus engaged, he, accompanied by an Indian, proceeded upstream until the light failed. Everywhere he saw a succession of rapids and falls; and he came to the conclusion that farther progress by water was impossible. Had the water been at a higher stage, as it would be in the course of a week or two, he would not have been able to ascend to the point he had already attained. There the river is not more than fifty yards wide, and flows between stupendous rocks. From the precipices above great fragments of rock fell and strewed the edge of the river, and along the face of the cliffs Mackenzie observed a seam of "bituminous substance which resembles coal." Mackay and the Indians, who journeyed by land, passed "several chasms in the earth that emitted heat and smoke, which diffused a strong sulphureous stench."

They had departed from the Forks Fort on May 9th, and, after a strenuous journey lasting eleven days, had reached the eastern boundary of the great cañon, a dis-

tance of one hundred and forty-eight miles, according to Mackenzie, from the starting-point.[1] Before they could again resume the voyage by water, they must first pass the formidable Rocky Mountain Portage, an arduous undertaking over a mountain trail of twelve miles. The trail cuts across country, forming the base of an isosceles triangle, whose apex points to the south. The two sides of the triangle, formed by the Peace River cañon, measure over twenty miles. In that distance the water descends 270 feet. Above the river tower precipices, which sometimes attained 1000 feet in height. The Peace itself, tearing wildly through the deep narrow gorge, tumbling over falls, rushing impetuously down rocky rapids, lashed everywhere into seething white water, presents a spectacle awful in its grandeur.

On Wednesday, May 22nd, the task of carrying everything they possessed over the twelve-mile portage was commenced. First the canoe, and afterwards the baggage, provisions, &c., were conveyed with infinite toil, and no little danger, from the river below to the camping ground on the heights above, "a very perilous undertaking, as one false step of any of the people concerned in it would have been instantly followed by falling headlong into the water." Men were set to work cutting a road, others following with the goods and the canoe. Mackenzie was everywhere, superintending, lending a hand with the canoe, using an axe to fell trees with the trail-makers. All Thursday they worked, always inspired by the example and cheerfulness of the leader. Deep ravines and steep ascents were encountered, but they and all obstacles were overcome by Mackenzie's indomitable will. On the third day, Friday, the descent to the river began, and at four o'clock in the afternoon it was reached, a short distance above the head of the rapids, at the place visited by Mackay on the 21st. Two hundred yards below, the

[1] Selwyn made the distance 152 miles; Dawson gave it as 208 miles.

river plunged at a terrific velocity between perpendicular rocks only thirty-five yards apart.

All of the next day, Saturday, 25th, was occupied in making poles, putting the canoe in order, and preparing for the next stage of the journey. It was near this spot that at a later date the Hudson's Bay Company established Cust's House. At the foot of the rapids, where the portage began, Simon Fraser built Rocky Mountain House in 1805. The name of the place was later changed to Hudson's Hope, which it still retains.

Before leaving that camp at five o'clock, Saturday afternoon, to resume the journey, Mackenzie erected a pole, to which he attached a knife, flint and steel, beads, &c., as a token of amity to the Indians, and to this collection one of his hunters added a small piece of wood, chewed at one end into a sort of brush, to denote abundance of game in that locality. They then embarked, and after proceeding a mile and three-quarters, with high hills all around them, Mackenzie observed and noted one on the south side that towered above all the rest. This was the Buffalo's Head, the view from whose summit is so graphically described by Captain Butler in the 'Wild North Land.' From there, in April 1872, Butler gazed upon "a mass of yellow grass and blue anemones." Mackenzie, however, passed it by, and after making about four miles against a stiff current and a rising stream, camped for the night.

Although near the end of May, the men complained much of the cold in their fingers, and on Sunday, when the voyage was resumed, they were obliged to use poles instead of paddles on that account. The passing of a "small river . . . from the north" on that day is noted. This was Eight Mile Creek, it being that distance above Cust's House. Sixteen miles were made that day, camp being made at seven P.M. On Monday the hunters killed a stag, the second deer they had secured since leaving the head of the portage. Passing Carbon River they

encountered several rapids, but did not have to make a portage until the following day, at the *Rapids qui ne parle pas*, a misnomer, inasmuch as the noise made is heard for quite a distance. Mackenzie does not note having passed the Na-bes-che or Otter-tail River, just before coming to the rapids.

To keep his men contented and in good humour, Mackenzie would give them a "regale," or treat, generally of grog or a tot of rum, after an arduous day's work, or some special exertion or occasion. These repeated libations made great inroads in the supply of liquor, and the last of a keg of the spirit was consumed on Wednesday, May 29th. Mackenzie thereupon conceived the idea of writing an account of the journey from the Forks, placing the written paper in the keg and turning it adrift on the river. With the thought came execution. The story was written, the sheet of paper thrust into the keg through the bung-hole, which was then closed securely, and he "consigned this epistolary cargo to the mercy of the current." Needless to say, nothing more was ever heard of either keg or letter: it probably came to grief in the passage through the cañon.

The following day they passed Clearwater River, which flows from the south, and on Friday morning passed the mouth of Barnard River, a mountain torrent by which they "were very much endangered." So cold were the men at nine in the forenoon that a landing was made and a fire lighted. The heat thus generated and a "regale" of rum soon restored them to a more comfortable condition, and they again embarked. They passed mountain after mountain, one of which now bears the name of Mount Selwyn, and on proceeding a few miles farther they "arrived at the fork, one branch running west-north-west, and the other south-south-east." The first or northerly branch, the largest and longest, was afterwards ascended in 1798 by James Finlay, left in charge of the New Establishment in 1793, and bears his name.

The southerly branch is the Parsnip River. Which of the two to follow Mackenzie did not know. His own inclination was to take the northerly fork, "as it appeared to me to be the most likely to bring us nearest to the part where I wished to fall upon the Pacific Ocean," from which it is evident he still entertained the hope of finding the river of whose existence he had been told by the Dog-rib and Hare Indians of the Mackenzie, and which he thought must be Cook's River. But he remembered the advice he had received at Smoky River from the old Beaver Indian, who had frequently visited Peace River district on war expeditions against the Sekenais, and who had warned him, Mackenzie, not on any account to follow it, as it was "lost in various branches among the mountains, and there was not any great river near it," which would indicate that the old man knew that part of the country quite well. On the contrary, Mackenzie was urged by the old warrior to follow the south branch, by which they would reach a carrying-place which would take them to another large river.

Fortunately for the outcome of the expedition, Mackenzie set aside his own wishes and resolved to take the advice of one who had first-hand knowledge. His men expressed their wish that he should ascend the Finlay, mainly because the Parsnip was the more rapid stream. Mackenzie, however, having fully decided what to do, ordered the steersman to stem the current of the Parsnip. So great was the resistance offered their progress by the velocity of the river that it took the whole afternoon to ascend three miles. This circumstance, and the hardships they had hitherto endured, aroused the discontent of the men, who freely cursed the Parsnip and the whole excursion. Mackenzie was obliged again to exercise his tact and diplomacy in handling a delicate situation, and this he did to such good purpose that he convinced them of his determination to proceed despite every obstacle and untoward condition.

Day after day they toiled against the rushing tide. Day after day the volume and velocity of the river increased, augmenting their labour. Mention is made of passing a large river on the right, Nation River, but the mouth of Pack River leading to M'Leod Lake seems to have been unobserved. This may be accounted for by the explorer's custom of occasionally taking a nap while *en route*. From Monday, May 27th, until June 4th his journal fails to show the courses of the voyage. He candidly explains the omission thus: "From this day to the 4th of June the courses of my voyage are omitted. I lost the book that contained them. I was in the habit of sometimes indulging myself with a short doze in the canoe, and I imagine that the branches of the trees brushed the book from me when I was in such a situation." The same reason may explain several other omissions as well.

On June 5th, Mackenzie, Mackay, and the two Indian hunters landed with the intention of ascending a hill to make a reconnaissance, the voyageurs being instructed to continue the journey and to give certain signals by gun-fire if necessary. The reconnaissance was duly made, and, proceeding in the direction of up-stream, the river was in due time regained. Gun-shot signals were given without any answer being received. Whether the canoe was below or above them was a question none could answer. Mackay and one Indian went down-stream, while Mackenzie and the other hunter took the opposite direction. Mackenzie blamed himself for his imprudence in leaving his people, "an act of indiscretion which might have put an end to the voyage I had so much at heart." They were tired and hungry. No game was seen all that day. Mackenzie and his companion gave up the search, and were in the act of preparing couches of branches of evergreens whereon to pass the night when they heard the discharge of firearms from down-stream. Weary as they were they struggled to rejoin their comrades, and it was almost dark when they reached the

camp. The voyageurs excused their slow progress by alleging the canoe had broken. Mackenzie professed to believe them, and consoled them with the comforting "regale." On the 7th he took observations to learn his position, which he found to be 55° 2′ 51″ N. latitude and 122° 35′ 50″ W. longitude.

They now began to be anxious about the "carrying-place" of which they had been told, and their only hope of obtaining any information about it was in falling in with some natives, of whom they had as yet not seen any. On Sunday, June 9th, however, after a long day's travel, the smell of wood smoke assailed their nostrils—the smell of a camp fire—and they heard the noise of people moving confusedly in the woods, from which signs they knew they had disturbed a party of Indians at their encampment, who had observed their approach while themselves remained unseen. No less unprepared for possible hostilities were the travellers, and Mackenzie ordered the canoe to be paddled to the opposite side of the river. Before half the distance had been accomplished two men appeared on the bank, brandishing their spears, displaying their bows and arrows, and accompanying their hostile gestures with loud cries. Despite the overtures of peace held out to them for acceptance, they declared they would discharge their arrows at the white men if they attempted to make a landing before they were fully satisfied of their peaceful intentions. Ultimately this was done to their satisfaction. They laid aside their weapons, and Mackenzie landed and took each of them by the hand, whereupon one of them tremulously drew his knife from his sleeve and presented it to the explorer as a sign of his submission. "They examined us," says Mackenzie, "and everything about us with a minute and suspicious attention. They had heard, indeed, of white men, but this was the first time that they had ever seen a human being of a complexion different from their own." One of the men was sent to fetch back

the others of the party, who had fled for safety, and who now returned. The entire party of Indians when all were assembled consisted of three men, three women, and seven or eight children, of the Sekenais tribe.

Mackenzie determined to camp near them until they became quite accustomed to his presence, and intended asking them for all the information they could give about the rivers and the country in general. Had he not fallen in with any natives, it had been his intention to land at what he considered a favourable place for finding the "carrying-place," and then sending parties out in several directions to search for another river. If this failed, he would return down the Parsnip and ascend the Finlay.

Mackenzie landed at three in the afternoon, and two hours later the fugitive women and children came in, with scratched legs and bleeding feet, for in their haste of flight they had left their moccasins and leggings behind them. To console them for their discomfort and to gain their good opinion, Mackenzie gave them presents of beads and other articles, and some pemmican. Their confidence thus restored, the explorer began to question them, but his inquiries did not elicit much information from them beyond that a moon's travel to the west there were "other tribes, who live in houses . . . and . . . extend their journies to the sea coast, or, to use their expression, the Stinking Lake, where they trade with people like us, that come there in vessels as big as islands." But all inquiries about a great river met with nothing but professions of ignorance of the existence of such a stream. In vain did Mackenzie promise to bring ships laden with goods to the mouth of it if they would but show it to him or tell him where to find it; in vain did he promise to furnish them with everything they might want, and to make peace between them and the Beaver Indians, if they would, on his return, accompany him across the Rocky Mountains. None of these undertakings advanced the object of his inquiries. Nor did he

meet with any better success next day when he again renewed his questioning. All he could extract from them was a repetition of what they had already told him, with the addition that they had themselves just come from another stream, which they declared to be a branch of that they were then on.

This negative state of affairs greatly perturbed Mackenzie, and he almost decided to abandon the canoe and go overland, but further reflection soon convinced him of the futility of such a course, because of the inability to carry sufficient provision and presents to ensure their safety. To continue the journey up the Parsnip seemed useless: to abandon the enterprise altogether was a thought too painful to indulge in. In the midst of this state of perplexity and anxious solicitude came unexpected relief. One of the Indians remaining by the camp fire, apart from his companions, began conversing with the interpreters about a great river, and Mackenzie speedily learned that he knew of a large stream flowing towards the mid-day sun, a branch of which ran not far from the stream they were then navigating. Mackenzie induced him to draw the course of the great river on a piece of bark, the result of the interview being the resurrection of hope and confidence. This unlooked-for information did not come to light until the second day after falling in with the Indians. Within an hour after receiving it Mackenzie bade the Sekanais good-bye, and, after an exchange of gifts and other courtesies, with one of their number as guide resumed his journey up the Parsnip.

Three days later, on Wednesday, 12th June, after following a narrow meandering stream, they arrived at a small lake about two miles long, which Mackenzie considered as the highest and southernmost source of the Peace River, and whose position he found to be 54° 24′ N. latitude and 121° W. longitude. There they landed and unloaded the canoe. A portage of eight hundred and

seventeen paces by a well-beaten path led over a low ridge, the summit of the water-shed separating the affluents of the Parsnip, whose waters ultimately empty into the Arctic Ocean through the Mackenzie River from the sources of the Fraser River, which flows into the Pacific. At the beginning of the portage they found several canoes left there by the natives, together with baskets containing various articles hanging on the trees. In the baskets were nets, hooks, traps, &c. Some of these Mackenzie took, leaving in exchange a knife, beads, awls, &c., as was his custom.

The portage conducted them to another small lake, on which they embarked. Traversing this, they descended a short stream into still another lake, out of which ran Bad River, now named James Creek, which took them into the Fraser. Mackenzie had intended walking part of the distance along Bad River, but his men, apprehensive of what lay before them, expressed a wish that he should go in the canoe with them, so that if they were lost he would perish with them. To placate them he did as they requested. It soon became evident that their fears were not without foundation. After making a portage past a rapid the canoe was reladen, and the journey resumed. Almost immediately the canoe struck, and the force of the current drove it sideways down the river. They all jumped out to remedy this disaster, but coming to deep water were obliged to scramble on board again with the utmost haste, one man being left on the bar. The others had barely regained their places when the canoe drove against a rock, which shattered the stern so that the steersman could not keep his place; and while this new trouble was still engaging their care, the current forced the canoe against the shore and smashed the bow, and, as if this did not sufficiently discommode them, they encountered a cascade, and suffered several punctures in the bottom of the canoe, and all the supporting bars or thwarts were started, so that the vessel

lay flat upon the water, and it was only after the severest exertions that they reached shore with the remnants of the wreck and such of the cargo that had not gone to the bottom, the most important loss being their entire stock of bullets, which was lost beyond recovery. Fortunately the powder escaped a wetting, but most of the other things were soaked, and had to be spread out to dry.

The men were much downcast by this accident, and gave free vent to their misgivings. Mackenzie paid no attention to their complaints until their panic passed and they were warmed and comforted by a hearty meal, not omitting "rum enough to raise their spirits." Then, and not until then, he harangued them, pointing out that the danger they had just encountered arose from their ignorance of the river and not from any danger to navigation. They would in future profit by the lesson learned from the occurrence. He urged upon them "the honour of conquering disasters," and the disgrace that would attend them should they return home without having attained the object of the expedition. He reminded them of the courage and resolution which was the peculiar boast of the north men, and that he looked to them to sustain the reputation enjoyed by men of their breed and calling. As for the loss of the bullets, had they not abundance of shot out of which a further supply could be made?

This address had the desired effect. The men proposed to abandon the wrecked canoe and carry their goods to the river, which the guide said was not far distant. But this plan did not receive the approval of their leader. Instead, he sent two of the Canadians and an Indian to obtain a supply of birch bark, and to proceed as far as the river itself if they could do so within the day. Night fell, and as they did not return Mackenzie became uneasy. To his intense relief about ten o'clock he heard a shout, and shortly afterwards the Indian entered the camp, his clothes torn to rags, bringing a small quantity

of inferior bark. He had parted with the two Canadians at sunset. Of the river or creek upon which they then were he gave a discouraging account, describing it as a succession of rapids and falls and snags.

While this reconnaissance was being made, Mackenzie and the others spent the day in patching up the badly used canoe. That day also, says Mackenzie in his journal, "we had an escape which I must add to the many instances of good-fortune which I experienced in this perilous expedition. The powder had been spread out, to the amount of eighty pounds, to receive the air; and in this situation one of the men carelessly and composedly walked across it with a lighted pipe in his mouth, but without any ill consequence from such an act of criminal negligence. I need not add that one spark might have put a period to all my anxiety and ambition."

At noon Mackenzie took an observation, and gave the latitude as 54° 23′ N. He observed trees and plants which he had not seen elsewhere north of latitude 52°—cedar, hemlock, maple, &c.

The next morning, Friday, while the work of repairing the canoe was in progress, the two Canadian scouts came in, hungry, cold, and ragged, with a report substantially the same as that of the Indian. They had seen the larger river, however, but were of the opinion it would be necessary to carry everything to it, owing to the obstacles to navigation in the stream they had embarked on. The canoe was patched up, and on Saturday the journey was continued, four men in the canoe, the others carrying on shore part of the freight. That morning Mackenzie experienced the first instance of disobedience to mar the journey. Beauchamp flatly refused to embark in the canoe when ordered. Under the circumstances Mackenzie did not deem it expedient to inflict severe punishment, "but as he had the general character of a simple fellow among his companions and had been frightened out of what little sense he possessed by our late dangers, I

rather preferred to consider him as unworthy of accompanying us, and to represent him as an object of ridicule and contempt for his pusillanimous behaviour, though, in fact, he was a very useful, active, and laborious man."

At the close of the day they assembled round a blazing fire, and the entire party were enlivened by a "regale," while, their good spirits being restored, they enjoyed in anticipation the pleasures of emerging from the present difficulties and continuing the way gliding down a strong and steady stream.

Sunday did not prove as lucky a day for them as had Saturday, for not only was a hole broken in the canoe bottom while descending a rapid, but a toilsome portage through deep mud so discouraged the men that their murmurs broke forth afresh. Four men were assigned to the task of carrying the canoe, which, what with patches and gum, was become so heavy that two men could not carry it more than a hundred yards without being relieved. The other two men and Mackenzie followed with the cargo. The extent of their progress that day was only two miles. So discouraged were the men that Mackenzie found it necessary to again give them a dram of rum. After the others had crept into their blankets Mackenzie sat up until midnight, as he had made a practice of doing, to keep watch over the guide. At twelve he awoke Mackay to relieve him.

Whether Mackay fell asleep or not is not told; probably he dozed during his watch. Be that as it may, the guide escaped, as Mackenzie was informed by Mackay at three o'clock in the morning. Immediate search was made, but without avail, the darkness and the Indian's cunning knowledge of woodcraft favouring the flight. The search was abandoned, nor was any further time wasted in renewing the chase when daylight came, all energies being directed in pursuing the voyage.

Travelling alternately by land and water, cutting a road through the forest growth when portaging became

necessary, at eight o'clock in the evening of Monday, June 17th, the party arrived at the bank of the "great river," the north branch (now called Herrick Creek) of the North Fork (Upper M'Gregor River) of the Fraser. To Mackenzie, the discoverer, it was an unknown unnamed river, a stream no white man had seen before, upon which he and his companions were the first civilised beings to embark. Had Mackenzie observed and ascended Pack River in place of continuing up the Parsnip, he would have reached the Fraser a considerable distance lower down at a saving of much time and energy.

The achievement is chronicled by Mackenzie in his customary matter-of-fact manner; but simple as are the few words in which he tells of it, it is easy to read the inner delight of the man. "At length we enjoyed," he says, "after all our toil and anxiety, the inexpressible satisfaction of finding ourselves on the bank of a navigable river on the west side of the first great range of mountains."

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE FRASER TO THE PACIFIC.

It is unfortunate that Mackenzie's notes of his voyage down the Fraser River are not clearer and fuller than they are. It is difficult to follow him and accurately recognise precisely all the localities of which he makes mention. This is rendered more difficult by his omission of well-known landmarks. It is possible that the mists that hung about the river in the early hours of the morning, generally about three or four o'clock when he began the day's travel, so obscured the shores that he may not have seen those local characteristics that would have made it so easy to follow his every movement. As it is, it is more or less guesswork to attempt to define his position from day to day. It is very evident that, after negotiating the difficulties of Bad River (James Creek), an affluent of Herrick Creek, the north branch of the North Fork of the Fraser, he camped at the junction of those two small streams, that confluence being a few miles from the broader North Fork itself, now named M'Gregor River.

Embarking in the cranky, scarcely sea-worthy canoe, now so heavy by repeated repairs as to be no longer "easily carried three or four miles by two men without resting," as when the expedition departed from Fort Forks on the Peace, the descent of the "great river," the Fraser, began. A very short distance carried them to M'Gregor River, and soon they entered a cañon, the

current being "very strong but perfectly safe," which bore them swiftly down-stream to its junction with the South Fork, the main Fraser, which takes its rise in Tête Jaune Pass. The distance covered from the point of embarkation to the confluence is given by Mackenzie at about thirty-seven miles, which is ten miles too much. There they found the river, half a mile wide, with a slack current and a depth of sixteen feet. So far all is perfectly clear. There can be no mistake about the place at which they had arrived. "Here was the great fork of which our guide had informed us, and it appeared to be the largest branch from the south-east," the explorer notes in his journal. Then follows a detailed account of his courses, which show that after passing the confluence of the two main branches he travelled another thirty-two miles before making camp for the night. In that distance of thirty-two miles two small rivers (Toy Creek and Salmon River) were seen flowing into the Fraser from the right-hand (north) side, and at the last of these they saw smoke, presumably from Indian camp fires; but Mackenzie was unwilling to order his men to return up-stream in order to visit the camp, and decided to post-pone interviewing those natives until he was homeward bound.

The following morning—foggy again—embarkation took place at three o'clock, the murkiness of the atmosphere being increased by smoke from forest fires, the air being filled with the "strong odour of the gum of cypress and spruce-fir." After travelling twenty-eight miles, Mackenzie's estimate, "the rocks contracted in such a manner on both sides of the river as to afford the appearance of the upper part of a fall or cataract." A landing was made, a not very clearly defined trail followed—they conjectured it was traced by Indians making portages at that place; and upon examining the river before them, the travellers decided that "the rapids were of considerable length and impassable for a light canoe."

Whereupon the faintly marked Indian trail was widened to admit the passage of the canoe, which was carried on the shoulders of the men to the foot of the rapids. The weight of the craft was such that it cracked and broke as they carried it. The distance of the portage was only half a mile, but it took four hours to accomplish it! "The labour and fatigue," declares Mackenzie, "beggars description, when we at length conquered this afflicting passage over a rocky and most rugged hill." While the canoe was being repaired, Mackenzie took an observation which gave him 53° 42′ 20″ N. latitude. Once more launching their craft, a quarter of a mile took them to another carrying-place, a rocky point about twice the length of the canoe.

It was characteristic of Mackenzie to describe obstacles and difficulties he encountered in the mildest and most modest language. His description of this part of the cañon of the Upper Fraser is an instance of it. He says: "From the extremity of this point to the rocky and almost perpendicular bank that rose on the opposite shore is not more than forty or fifty yards. The great body of water, at the same time tumbling in successive cascades along the first carrying-place, rolls through this narrow passage in a very turbid current, and full of whirlpools." That is all. The next sentence is in such striking contrast that it is almost amusing. "On the banks of the river there was great plenty of wild onions, which when mixed up with our pemmican was a great improvement of it, though they produced a physical effect on our appetites, which was rather inconvenient to the state of our provisions."

What rapids are these described by Mackenzie in such bald fashion? There is no doubt but that the place referred to by the explorer is the Fort George Cañon, where the river divides into three channels, separated by masses of rock, rocky islets standing in mid-stream, through which the water flows at a high velocity. In

support of this assumption the latitude given by Mackenzie, 53° 42′ 20″, is practically that of this situation. Setting the question of latitude aside, however, there are other circumstances that should be considered. Taking the forks of the Fraser as the starting-point, the distance travelled by Mackenzie from there to the rapids on the 18th and 19th totals sixty miles according to his journal, an estimate that is three miles short of the actual distance to Fort George at the mouth of the Nechaco River. As the rapids are eighteen miles below the Nechaco, Mackenzie underestimated the distance from the Forks of the Fraser to the rapids by over twenty miles. It is eighty-one miles from the Forks to Fort George Cañon.

Within comparatively recent years the Dominion Government has caused some of the obstacles to steamboat navigation of the Fraser at Fort George Cañon to be removed by blasting, so that the rapids are not to-day identical with what they were in Mackenzie's time, though they are still sufficiently formidable. The writer has both run and ascended them since the "improvements" were made, and there is nothing to deter experienced boatmen from undertaking their passage without trepidation, although the novice may feel grave uneasiness. Other travellers, however, ran the rapids before the blasting was done. Four Canadians in 1862 made the passage in a canoe without portaging, and in the diary kept by one of them the incident is noted: "Past the rapids, thank God, in safety, and I think with not a great deal of trouble." And these men were not veteran voyageurs but townsmen, whose former experience with a canoe was paddling about the lakes in Ontario. Their canoe was a sound one, however. Perhaps had Mackenzie been possessed of one in like condition he would have run the rapids, and not obliged his men to carry the heavy, patched, and broken vessel with the lading over half a mile portage so rough and difficult to traverse that it occupied four long hours of unremitting labour!

After travelling for thirty-five miles below Fort George Cañon another rapid was encountered. "Here the river narrows between steep rocks, and a rapid succeeded, which was so violent that we did not venture to run it," says the journal. "I therefore ordered the loading to be taken out of the canoe, but she was now become so heavy that the men preferred running the rapid to the carrying her overland. Though I did not altogether approve of their proposition, I was unwilling to oppose it. Four of them undertook this hazardous expedition, and I hastened to the foot of the rapid with great anxiety to await the event, which turned out as I expected. The water was so strong that, although they kept clear of the rocks, the canoe filled, and in this state they drove half-way down the rapid, but fortunately she did not overset; and having got her into an eddy they emptied her, and in a half-drowned condition arrived safe on shore. The carrying-place is about half a mile over, with an Indian path across it." There is no doubt as to this place: it is the Cottonwood Cañon, about seventy-five miles below the mouth of the Nechaco.

The other party already mentioned, who descended the Fraser in 1862 in a canoe, had a similar experience at the same place, as is told in the following extract from a journal kept by one of them: "Had not gone more than three or four miles when we came to the Cañon. We found it much worse than the other (Fort George Cañon)—high rocks on both sides. After hard work clambering along rocks and in the water we got her (the canoe) past the worst of it. We then came to a perpendicular cliff with no beach, so that we found were obliged to run her down what remained. We got in her, and were carried broadside by the force of an eddy right into the middle of the swell and very nearly filled; but, thanks to the Almighty, though she shipped considerable water, we got to shore. We then baled her out, and ran down the remainder without accident."

This is a better description of these rapids than that given by Mackenzie. The worst water occurs at the head of the cañon. In the cañon itself the walls of solid rock rise vertically from the water, the channel being very narrow. Between the walls of rock the river whirls and surges in eddies and whirlpools. Simon Fraser experienced a good deal of difficulty at the same place.

The following day, June 21st, the summer solstice, Mackenzie came to "where a large river flowed in from the left, and a smaller one from the right." The large river on the left is Quesnelle River, so named after Jules Maurice Quesnelle by Simon Fraser fifteen years later. The smaller river on the right is Puntataencut River.

Mackenzie did not halt at Quesnelle River, but, continuing the journey down-stream, at the place afterwards named Deserter's River a canoe was seen drawn up the bank. While the travellers were taking a note of this, a second canoe containing one Indian emerged from a small stream. No sooner did the solitary boatman observe the strangers bearing down upon him than he gave a loud cry to alarm his friends. The response was immediate: a number of men, armed with bows, arrows, and spears, appeared on the river bank, and threatened instant death to Mackenzie and his companions should they attempt to land.

Since their guide deserted them at Bad River, Mackenzie had had no speech with any natives. During the descent of the river Indian encampments had been passed, and at one of these, after passing the rapids at Fort George Cañon, Mackenzie's hunters had overtaken some natives, who had fled into the woods as soon as they perceived the strangers' canoe. Notwithstanding the efforts made to convince them of their friendly intentions, the natives refused to listen, and not only threatened them but discharged a number of arrows, which were only avoided by taking refuge behind trees. In their haste the natives had left their camp fires burning and

their baskets containing fishing-tackle and other articles, which the voyageurs examined with much curiosity. Mackenzie naïvely remarks: "I prevented my men from taking any of them; and for a few articles of mere curiosity, which I took myself, I left such things in exchange as would be more useful to their owners."

On the 20th, eighteen miles below their camping-place of the night before, they had landed at a deserted native house, the first permanent habitation they had seen west of the mountains. It is described by Mackenzie as being thirty feet long and twenty wide, with three doors each measuring three feet high and a foot and a half wide. Inside were three fireplaces, with sleeping places on either side of them. The walls were five feet in height, the roof being supported by a ridge pole resting on two upright forked poles ten feet high. Poles stretched across the building were provided for the drying and smoking of fish. There also Mackenzie saw a large fish-trap, cylindrical in form. Everything was in excellent condition, from which he concluded its owners intended to return to it. Farther down the river they had seen two houses on islands, the last signs of the country being inhabited until they saw the Indians below Quesnelle.

On the same day, before their arrival at Cottonwood Cañon, they had passed a river, Blackwater River, on the right. Little did the explorer dream that his way to fame lay in the direction whence that stream flowed.

The canoe was in such a wretched condition that Mackenzie decided it had served its purpose, and a new one must be made as soon as possible. To this end he sent four men into the woods to secure a supply of birch bark, and at noon they returned with a quantity sufficient to make the bottom of a canoe thirty feet long.

Resuming the narrative at the place—about midway between Quesnelle mouth and Alexandria, afterwards named Deserter's River—where the unfriendly natives had appeared on shore brandishing their weapons and

making hostile gestures. Mackenzie instructed his interpreters to make peace overtures. These produced no other result than threats of instant death should a landing be attempted, the threat being emphasised by the discharge of a flight of arrows, none of which, fortunately, did any harm. Unwilling to expose his men needlessly to danger, and equally unwilling to pass on without placating the natives, Mackenzie landed on the opposite side of the river abreast of them. In the meantime two natives set off in a canoe down-stream to spread the alarm to the people below, and probably with the intention of returning with reinforcements. Mackenzie comments: "This circumstance determined me to leave no means untried that might engage us in a friendly intercourse with them before they acquired additional security and confidence by the arrival of their relations and neighbours, to whom their situation would be shortly notified. I therefore formed the adventurous project which was happily crowned with success. I left the canoe and walked by myself along the beach, in order to induce some of the natives to come to me, which I imagined they might be disposed to do when they saw me alone, without any apparent possibility of receiving assistance from my people"; but not to expose himself unnecessarily to undue risk, he posted one of the interpreters, armed with two guns, in the woods, with instructions to kill any native who might attempt to shoot him. "I had not been long at my station," recounts Mackenzie, "and my Indian in ambush behind me, when two of the natives came in a canoe, but stopped when they got within a hundred yards of me. I made signs for them to land, and, as an inducement, displayed looking-glasses, beads, and other alluring trinkets. At length, but with every mark of apprehension, they approached the shore, stern foremost, but would not venture to land. I now made them a present of some beads, with which they were going to push off, when I renewed my entreaties, and

after some time prevailed on them to come ashore and sit down by me." Acting upon instructions given beforehand, the interpreter now joined them and conversed with them. Mackenzie invited them to accompany him to his camp, but they declined, and when they saw some of the voyageurs approaching they requested Mackenzie to send them back, which he promptly did. Soon afterwards they embarked in their canoe, recrossed the river, and rejoined their own people, who received them with great joy. They displayed their gifts to their friends, and after a consultation together an invitation was extended to Mackenzie to visit their encampment. So sympathy was the invitation acted upon, the voyageurs displaying unusual alacrity, that the fears of the natives were again partly aroused, but this uneasiness was soon dispelled: trinkets were distributed among the adults and sugar given to the children.

Seizing the opportunity to ascertain some information about the country, Mackenzie instructed his interpreters to make inquiries. From the answers received the explorers learned that the river ran south, and that white people were building houses at its mouth. In this statement they were, of course, wrong. Fraser River, as such, had not been "discovered," and no white men had as yet entered or visited its mouth, both Captain Vancouver and the Spanish navigators having failed to find it. The tales these Indians had heard, carried from tribe to tribe from the coast to the interior, had reference to the settlement at Nootka on Vancouver Island.

Mackenzie learned also that farther downstream the river was absolutely impassable in three places from falls and rapids, which were infinitely higher, more rugged and dangerous than anything he had yet encountered. In addition to the difficulties of navigation, there were dangers from their neighbours, whom they represented as a "very malignant race, who lived in large subterranean recesses." Their neighbours were the Shuswaps.

Lillooets, and Thompsons, and the subterranean recesses were the habitations known as "Keekwillie houses," abodes half excavated and half superstructure, in which they lived while at their permanent or winter quarters. They were much concerned when the travellers told them of their intention to continue their journey until they arrived at the sea, and strove to dissuade them from making the attempt, assuring them that they would be killed by the natives, who were possessed of iron, arms, and utensils obtained through the medium of the Indians of the coast from white people who came in great canoes.

None of these tales discouraged Mackenzie. So far from being dissuaded from continuing his journey, he persuaded two of the natives to accompany him. Before this could be carried into operation a canoe containing three men came into view from down the river, relatives of the people the travellers were then with, and who had been told of the arrival of the strangers by the two men who had hastened down-stream to spread the alarm. So fearful were they that, although they must have observed the amicable relations that had been established between the white men and their relatives, they assumed a threatening attitude. Their fears, however, were soon removed, and they landed. One of them, who is described as a middle-aged person, who appeared to command the respect of his fellows, and who, upon learning the nature of the errand of the travellers, advised them to delay their departure until all the people among whom the alarm was being communicated should arrive; for if they attempted to push on, they would assuredly meet with opposition, and that the presence of two of the natives would not help them, doubtless because it would be assumed they were being held as slaves, or at any rate detained against their wills. Thinking that by further delay he might ascertain something more about the country, Mackenzie ordered the canoe to be unloaded and his tent pitched. Here, as at other places, he found

that once a footing of friendship was established the natives became uncomfortably familiar, and he was obliged to let them know he wished to be alone and undisturbed. From the man who appeared to be a sort of leader among them, Mackenzie succeeded in obtaining a rough sketch, drawn on a piece of bark, of a plan of the course of the river.

Mackenzie conversed with these people a good deal during his sojourn amongst them. They numbered seven families, containing eighteen men. He described them as being clad in leather (buckskin) and handsome beaver and rabbit-skin robes. They had come there to fish for the winter supply, and, says the explorer, "the fish which they take are large, and only visit this part of the river at certain seasons." This fish is the salmon, which run up that river and its tributaries on their way to the spawning grounds. The Indians make a practice of catching large numbers of them, which they split, dry in the sun, and sometimes cure by smoking, for winter consumption. Mackenzie thought the natives at that camp but little, if any, different in manners, appearance, and language from "Rocky Mountain Indians."

As none of the people expected from farther down the river arrived at the camp, Mackenzie decided to continue the voyage on the morning of June 22nd, which fell on a Saturday. Before leaving he told them that if he found what they had been told to be correct, he would either return himself or send some other person to them with a supply of such goods as they might wish to have.

Taking two of the natives with them—one in a small pointed canoe with Mr Mackay, the other in the larger canoe with Mackenzie,—a start was made at six o'clock. The river was here bordered by the "benches" which are characteristic of part of the valleys of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers. After covering about eleven miles they landed near a house "the roof of which alone appeared above ground," one of the keekwillie houses

already referred to. The house did not contain any people, but on the bench above several men were seen, "who displayed the same postures and menacing actions as those we have so lately described." The two hostages, or guides, were sent to them, but it was not until after a prolonged discussion that one of them was persuaded to visit the strangers. Shortly afterwards the remainder of the party, seven in number, followed his example. They carried their bows and arrows in their hands ready for instant use, their garments being so arranged as to leave the right arm uncovered and free for action. A cord fastened a blanket or leather covering under the right armpit, so that it hung upon the left shoulder, and might be occasionally employed as a target that would turn an arrow which was nearly spent. As soon as they had recovered from their fears, ten women joined them, but they had left their children at a distance where they could not be harmed. A few presents and the assurance of friendly intentions put them all on a good understanding. The use of firearms was explained and demonstrated. "At the same time," says Mackenzie, "I calmed their astonishment by the assurance that, though we could at once destroy those who did us injury, we could equally protect those who showed us kindness."

Three miles farther on several more natives were seen on the high ground, a landing was made, and the guides sent to them as before; but so wild and ferocious did these people appear that fears were entertained for the safety of the messengers of goodwill and peace. At length, however, they were persuaded to adopt a more friendly attitude and to visit the strangers, which they did one after another, sixteen men and several women, Mackenzie shaking hands with each, a form of salutation they had not seen before, but which the interpreters explained to them as a sign of friendship. The natives invited the strangers to pass the night at their lodges, which were not far distant, promising to send two of their

young men with them the following day to introduce them to "the next station, who were very numerous, and ill-disposed towards strangers."

As Mackenzie was about to embark, with the intention of proceeding to the lodges of these natives, one of the women spoke several words in the Knisteneaux language, a term which Mackenzie appears to use as comprehending almost all of the Indian inhabitants of the plains east of the Rocky Mountains. As his interpreters understood that tongue, they were able to repeat her tale to the explorer. She told them that her people dwelt at the forks of that river, what Mackenzie calls a Rocky Mountain Indian, and that she had been taken prisoner by the Knisteneaux—probably on a war expedition—and had been carried by them across the mountains, where she had spent the greater part of a summer before she could make her escape, and, having recrossed the mountains, hoped to reach her own country and friends. Instead, she had fallen into the hands of the people with whom she now was, and who had visited her country as a war party, and driven her friends from the river into the mountains. She had no cause to complain of her present husband, but expressed a strong desire to return to her own people. Mackenzie requested her to go to him when he arrived at the native lodges, which she promised to do, but failed to keep her engagement, doubtless being prevented from so doing by the man who had taken possession of her.

Mackenzie arrived at the encampment before his hosts, but they soon joined him, with a greater number of women than had appeared before, but of the female prisoner he saw nothing. There were twenty-five people at the camp, too many to permit of a lavish distribution of gifts. Among the men were four from the neighbouring nation, and one Rocky Mountain Indian who had been with them for some time. By using him as an intermediary interpreter Mackenzie was successful in learning all

those people could tell him of the country and the river. He interpreted in his own tongue what the natives replied, and Mackenzie's own interpreters, who understood his language, interpreted to their leader. Selecting an elderly man from among the four inhabitants of the adjoining country, whose countenance prepossessed him in his favour, Mackenzie again explained the object of his journey, and asked their assistance in giving him information. At Mackenzie's request this person drew a sketch of the country upon a large piece of bark. He described the river as running to the east of south, receiving many rivers, and every six or eight leagues broken by falls and rapids, some of which were dangerous, and six of them impracticable. The portages, he said, were of great length, passing over hills and mountains. He told of three other tribes who spoke different languages. Beyond the countries they inhabited he knew nothing, save that it was a long way to the sea; and that, as he had heard, there was a "lake" which the natives did not drink. Few of these people ever came to the river, and then only at certain seasons to fish; that they procured iron, brass, copper, and trinkets from the westward, and that formerly those articles were obtained from the lower parts of the river. A knife was produced which had come from that quarter: its blade was ten inches long and an inch and a half wide, with a horn handle. It was said to have been "obtained from white men long before they had heard that any came to the westward." "One very old man observed," says the journal, "that as long as he could remember, he was told of white people to the southward; and that he had heard, though he did not vouch for the truth of the report, that one of them had made an attempt to come up the river, and was destroyed." The "white people to the southward" were, no doubt, the Spaniards who had settled in California and Mexico. It is amazing with what rapidity news filtered through nation after nation,

travelling immense distances and losing little of its original import in the process.

These people told Mackenzie that the distance across the country to the sea, the "Western Ocean," was very short. His own opinion was that it could not exceed five or six degrees, in which supposition he was quite within the mark. "If the assertion of Mr Mears be correct," comments Mackenzie, "it cannot be so far, as the inland sea which he mentions within Nootka must come as far east as 126° W. longitude."

The Mr Mears here mentioned was Captain John Meares. He had served as lieutenant in the Royal Navy in the war between Great Britain on the one side and Spain and France on the other. At the conclusion of the war he took command of a merchant ship to Calcutta, and while there decided to venture in the fur trade on the north-west coast of the American continent. As commander of the *Nootka*, a vessel of two hundred tons he had purchased together with the *Sea Otter* of half the tonnage, he sailed to Unalaska in 1786. Wintering in northern waters, his men suffered severely from scurvy, many of them perishing. Next year he sailed for China after a successful summer of trading. In 1788 Meares returned to the north-west coast with two other vessels, the *Felice* and the *Iphigenia*, he being in personal command of the first-named, and visited Nootka. It is not necessary in this place to enter into his activities and difficulties there; suffice it to say that after vainly searching down the coast for the river, which the Spaniards alleged they had discovered and named Rio de San Roque, he declared: "We can now with safety assert that there is no such river as that of San Roc, as laid down in the charts." It was, however, up that river that Captain Gray sailed in 1792 and named the Columbia. Having failed to find that stream, Meares sailed north again with the intention of exploring the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and sent his mate, Duffin, in the longboat to

penetrate the strait up which Captain Barkley had sailed the previous year. This was the so-called "inland sea . . . within Nootka" referred to above, but which extends farther to the east than the position Mackenzie assigned to it.

The natives assured Mackenzie that the road to the sea by the way they indicated was not difficult, as they avoided the mountains, keeping in the lowlands between them. According to them, their trail was well-defined from being travelled so often, and followed streams and a chain of lakes. To reach the people with whom they traded furs and buckskin for brass, iron, beads, &c., took them six days. These other people were the Bella Coola Indians, who obtained the metals, beads, &c., from white people who "were building houses at a distance," by which Nootka was meant. Hoping to learn from the female prisoner he had conversed with the previous day, definite information of the country "beyond the forks of the river, as well as of the pass through the mountains, from them," Mackenzie made inquiries about her, but received such evasive replies that he came to the conclusion her guardians feared his intention was to take her from them.

To all of this the members of the expedition had listened with keen attention, and they decided that it would be madness to continue journeying down the river through so hostile a country. The murmuring of the men, the scarcity of provisions—enough for no more than thirty days,—the small quantity of ammunition remaining, caused Mackenzie much perturbation, but did not deter him from his purpose of reaching the ocean. He decided, however, to change the manner of achieving his object by following the route just described to him. He was influenced in coming to this decision not only by the attitude of his men and the other circumstances mentioned, but because he now was of the opinion that the river he was following would not take him to where

he wished to arrive. "The more I heard of the river," he says, "the more I was convinced it would not empty itself into the ocean to the north of what is called the river of the west, so that with its windings the distance must be very great."

It has been supposed that by "the river of the west" here alluded to, Mackenzie referred to the river Captain Meares had looked for unsuccessfully, but which the Spaniards claimed existed, and which was "discovered" by Gray in May 1792, the Columbia. Mackenzie could not have heard of that discovery. Captain Gray did not return to Boston until July 1793, and it is very unlikely that intelligence of the discovery, even if known in London or Boston in 1792, could have reached Mackenzie before setting out from Fort Chipewyan for Peace River. It was not, therefore, the Columbia River Mackenzie had in mind when he wrote of the "river of the west," but of that other river of which he had learned when ascending the Mackenzie in 1789. His observations of latitude would give him sufficient evidence to convince him the river he was on could not empty itself into the ocean north of that stream, which he believed poured its waters into or near Norton Sound. The same evidence would tell him, if he had known of its existence, that the Fraser must necessarily reach the sea to the north of the River Oregon, that river of the west Jonathan Carver had written about. It may, therefore, be reasonably assumed that Mackenzie was thinking of Cook's River or the Yukon.

After a restless night, most of it spent, doubtless, in anxious thought over the problems that confronted him, he endeavoured to elicit further information from the Indians, and they told him that the place where they left the Fraser to reach the people to the westward with whom they traded was where another river flowed into it from that direction, and that they ascended that river in their canoes for four days, and, beyond that, two nights saw them at their journey's end.

Mackenzie realised that the psychological effect of a retrograde movement upon his men would not be good, but there seemed no help for it. Calling them together he diplomatically commended them for their patience, fortitude, and perseverance, telling them of the shorter route he had decided to pursue, but at the same time demanding of them a pledge that should this shorter way prove unfruitful they would return with him to the Fraser and continue the original route, and concluded by solemnly declaring that he would not abandon his design of reaching the sea if he had to make the attempt alone.

The result of such an address to the impressionable emotional voyageurs was precisely what one would look for from such people and under such circumstances—they unanimously professed their willingness, now as they had ever been, to abide by his decisions, and to follow him wherever he should go. This matter satisfactorily settled, Mackenzie requested them to prepare for immediate departure, and notified the natives of his intention, as well as informing the one who was to accompany them as guide. Before leaving that camp, Mr Mackay carved Mackenzie's name and the date upon a tree. At the last moment the guide-to-be suggested that he should proceed by land to his lodge to make preparations to go with them. His reason for proposing it was that he would reach his abode before them, and would be ready to embark when they arrived. Mackay and the two interpreters went with him.

At ten in the forenoon Mackenzie embarked, and made much faster time against the current than he anticipated possible in such a wretched craft. Arriving at the rendezvous, their new guide announced his intention of again going on by land, and Mackenzie could only acquiesce. He took the precaution, however, of sending the same companions with him.

Shortly after resuming the voyage up the river, Mac-

kenzie observed a canoe containing three men coming down. As soon as the natives saw the travellers they made for the shore, hauled out their canoe, and concealed themselves in the woods. The canoe was recognised as one they had seen before at the Indian houses. Soon afterwards they passed another canoe drawn up stern first on the shore. Camp was made that night at nine o'clock near a native encampment of two families whom they had seen at the houses. Mackenzie went to their camp immediately, and sat down with them. They gave him some roasted fish, and two of his men who had followed him were also treated to some of their provisions. The younger of the two male natives soon afterwards went away and did not return, and when Mackenzie retired to his own tent he felt some surprise that the other native did not accompany him; at their former meeting when going down the river he had been with Mackenzie day and night. Although he thought the conduct of these two men very strange, the explorer did not attach any great importance to it, nor suffer any apprehension for the safety of Mackay and those with him. Next day, however, continuing the journey, when they came in sight of the place where they first saw the natives, Deserter's River, about half-way between Alexandria and Quesnelle, the travellers were much surprised and disappointed to see Mackay and the two Indian hunters emerge alone from the shelter of a half-ruined house. Their countenances betrayed alarm, and, as soon as Mackenzie landed, they told him "that they had taken refuge in that place, with the determination to sell their lives, which they considered in the most imminent danger, as dear as possible."

It appeared that shortly after they had set out with the native from his house after parting with the canoe party, they had met a party of Indians, whom they had seen where they now were on the occasion of the downward voyage, and who appeared on this occasion to be

in a state of extreme anger and with arrows fitted to the string and bows bent threateningly. Their guide asked these men some questions, and upon receiving their answers, which none of Mackay's party understood, set off at his utmost speed. Mackay, however, followed by his men, ran after him until he overtook him, exhausted with running. In reply to Mackay's demand for an explanation of his conduct, the native said that some treachery was designed against them. Having told them this tale, the guide again began to run, taking them "through very bad ways"; nor would he slacken his pace when asked to do so, alleging his haste to rejoin his family so that he might prepare moccasins and other necessaries for the journey. He kept this up until ten at night, when they all rested on the ground, cold, wet, and hungry, afraid to light a fire lest they should draw the hostiles down upon them. At dawn they continued the journey, and arrived at the lodges to find them deserted. The guide made several trips into the woods, calling aloud and bellowing like a madman, and wound up by running away in the direction whence they had come, and had not been seen since. As Mackenzie was not at that rendezvous, Mackay feared the canoe party had all been destroyed, and he and his companions had already planned to take to the woods, and try to reach Peace River by following as direct a line in that direction as best they could—a wild scheme that could only have resulted in disaster. The hour of noon had been fixed upon as the limit of time they would wait for the arrival of Mackenzie. If he failed to appear then, they would have started on their perilous and hopeless venture.

At hearing this recital all Mackenzie's men became panic-stricken, and were for immediately abandoning further prosecution of the expedition. Mackenzie calmly faced the grave situation. He totally ignored the mutterings and terrors of his companions, coolly ordered them to unload the canoe all but six packages, and when this

was done he left four men in charge of the unloaded goods; and embarking in the canoe with the remaining men, returned to where he had camped the previous night, where he hoped to find the natives whom he had seen there. In this he was disappointed: they had flitted away in the silence of the night, and left every article of their property behind them, and he returned to where he had left the cargo and four men.

These strange circumstances perplexed him. Of their safety in case of attack he had no fear, not even if all the natives they had encountered combined against them. The superiority of firearms over bows and arrows ensured their ability to successfully resist an onslaught by much greater numbers, but he feared that the natives might so harass and annoy as to render a continuance of the journey to the sea impossible. That possibility disturbed him infinitely more than the prospect of a pitched battle. And not only had he this anxiety, but his own followers clamoured for immediate return to the Peace River. Mackenzie had no such intention. He was made of stouter stuff. The very presence of danger and difficulty seemed but to serve as a stimulus to his determination to persevere. He neither temporised nor expostulated with his timorous associates, but peremptorily bade them unload the canoe and take it out of the water. Upon examining the goods they found that the natives had stolen an axe, two knives, and the hunters' medicine-bag.

Mackenzie did not fail to realise the gravity of the situation. He had no intention of being caught napping, and immediately took steps to ensure their safety. He selected a position that he considered best calculated for defence, ordered the arms to be put in proper condition, served out a hundred bullets—the whole remaining stock, —and set some of the men to melt down shot to make more. While so employed they saw an Indian come down the river in a canoe and land at the native lodges,

which he carefully examined. Upon perceiving the white men he stood still as if uncertain what to do. Mackenzie took advantage of his state of mind to despatch one of his interpreters to interview him, but no arguments would persuade him to have confidence in the strangers; on the contrary, he threatened he would hasten to his friends, who would come and kill them all. He then disappeared.

The canoe was in need of repair, but they had no gum with which to patch it, nor had any of the company sufficient courage to venture into the woods in search of any. If they had to use it, it must be as it was, leaky and broken. To prepare for any emergency Mackenzie had the craft loaded again, and securely fastened to the shore by stout pickets. A constant watch was kept day and night, and a sentinel, who was relieved every hour, was placed at a distance. He himself snatched sleep when he could, always keenly alert, watchful that none relaxed in the performance of his duty.

The next day, June 25th, Mackay told him that the men had expressed their dissatisfaction to him without reservation, and had declared their determination not to follow the explorer any farther. Mackenzie, however, ignored these additional signs of discontent among his followers, and continued to employ his thoughts in contriving some way of reconciling the natives, without whose assistance as guides he would not be able to proceed, "when," he says in his journal, "my darling project would end in disappointment."

At noon that day they saw a man coming down-stream on a raft, but as soon as he espied the strangers he landed on the opposite shore, and instantly disappeared in the woods. Even in the midst of such immediate danger, unrest, and anxiety, Mackenzie did not fail in the exercise of his duty, for he then took an observation, and calculated his position at 52° 47′ 55″ N. latitude. While he was thus engaged his men prepared the canoe without

being ordered, and Mackenzie believed they had decided to begin the return journey without waiting for his commands. Again exercising his prudent self-restraint, although he must have been extremely angry with them, he pretended not to have noticed what they were doing and fortunately at that moment an incident occurred that diverted the attention of all the company. The Indian interpreters saw some one moving at the edge of the woods, and so reported to Mackenzie who at once sent them to discover who it was. They soon returned with a young woman whom Mackenzie recognised as one of the natives he had seen before. She explained that she had come to take some things which she had left behind. Mackenzie treated her with kindness, gave her food and a present of such articles as he thought would please her. When she expressed a wish to leave them, she was allowed to go. Mackenzie hoping that her reception would be the means of inducing the natives to return to their lodges.

That night, shortly after midnight, a startling noise in the woods created great uneasiness. Upon investigation the cause was found to be an old blind man who had come to join in the general flight of the natives from that place, who had been driven out of his sitting-place by the pangs of hunger. Mackenzie fed him, treated him with kindness, and so far gained his confidence that he explained the cause of the alarm among his people. Mackenzie gathered from him that some Indians from above had brought word that the strangers—Mackenzie's party—were enemies, and their unexpected return up the river had appeared to substantiate the report. Mackenzie improved the occasion by explaining the real reason for their return, and at the same time admired the impossibility of proceeding with his plans unless the services of one of the local people could be secured to guide them. The old man protested that if he had his sight he would willingly accompany them.

At sunrise (Wednesday, June 26th) a canoe containing one man was seen on the opposite side of the river, and at Mackenzie's request the blind man called to him to come to them, but he made no reply, save to hasten on his way down-stream. From the old fellow it was learnt that a number of the people who had been at the place on their former visit had gone up the river. Deeming it useless to remain there any longer, Mackenzie decided to continue the journey and to take the old man with him, telling him that he depended upon him to persuade any of his friends or relatives whom they might fall in with to act as their guide westward. The poor old man did not relish the prospect, and begged to be excused, but Mackenzie felt he was their one hope, and refused to accede to his request. In view of the fact that the place they were about to leave, and where they had encountered such unlooked-for anxieties, was where the native who had agreed to be their guide had deserted them, Mackenzie named it Deserter's River or Creek. It is a stream of some volume flowing into the Fraser from the west.

Leaving Deserter's River at seven o'clock in the morning, they were obliged to carry the blind man into the canoe, so reluctant was he to go with them, the first act during the expedition, states Mackenzie, "that had the semblance of violent dealing." As they were doing this the old man spoke in a very loud voice and in a tongue the interpreters did not understand. He explained that he was telling his wife, who was in hiding near the camp, to go for him to the carrying-place, where he supposed he would be released.

During the forenoon, at the foot of a rapid, they saw another canoe descending the river. It contained two men, who, as soon as they perceived the white stranger, avoided them by directing their canoe into the very heart of the rapids, and escaped without replying to the words addressed them by the blind man.

At three o'clock they saw "a lodge at the entrance

of a considerable river on the right, as well as the tracks of people in the mud at the mouth of a small river on the left." These streams were the Quesnelle and the Puntataencut Rivers, which they had passed going down on the 21st. The lodge was deserted, nor did they see any natives at either place.

Mackenzie must have frequently felt exasperated by the childish conduct of his men. All that day, for example, they had been in an extremely ill humour, but as they dared not vent their feelings upon their leader they quarrelled among themselves. When, however, about sunset, the canoe struck a snag and tore a large hole in the bottom, they cast aside all restraint and displayed their ill-temper without stint. Mackenzie left them to their own devices as soon as they landed, in a frame of mind not difficult to conjecture, and passed the night in an abandoned keekwillie house, a prey to anxiety, but hopefully expectant of finding his men more docile after a night's rest, which proved to be the case.

They embarked at half-past four the following morning, June 27th, and, by landing at several places on the way up-stream, succeeded in collecting sufficient bark with which to make a new canoe, the need of which had now become imperative. At five in the afternoon they came to a place suitable for the construction of the craft, a small island not thickly wooded, and on the mainland near by an abundance of spruce for the manufacture of the frame. The position of the island was found by observation to be 53° 3′ 7″ N. latitude and 122° 48′ W. longitude. It is situated a few miles below Cottonwood Cañon, near the left bank of the river, only a narrow channel separating it from the mainland. There they remained four days, engaged in building their new vessel.

On the second day of their sojourn Mackenzie lectured his men and took them to task for their conduct. "The conductor of the work, though a good man," remarks the explorer, "was remarkable for the tardiness of his opera-

tions, whatever they might be, and more disposed to eat than be active." The lecture was directed pointedly at this man, though also intended for all the others, who, of course, heard every word. He reproached this fellow for his general inactivity, and found fault with all of them "for their want of economy in the article of provisions." He told them that he knew they had been grumbling among themselves, and from what he knew he believed they wished to put an end to the voyage. If that were the case he asked them to tell him so frankly and explicitly, but he assured them that irrespective of whatever they might decide to do, it was his unalterable determination to proceed, despite every difficulty or danger that might threaten him. The man addressed was very much mortified at being singled out in that manner, and protested that he did not deserve the lecture any more than the rest of the men. Mackenzie, however, said no more. He had made himself perfectly clear, and that was all he had intended to do.

In the afternoon of that same day a canoe with two Indians came to the island, and, much to Mackenzie's surprise, one of them was the native who had promised to guide them but had deserted them at Deserter's River. He apologised profusely for his conduct, but asseverated that his whole time had been occupied in searching for his family, who had been seized with the general panic caused by the false reports of the natives who had first fled from the white strangers. He also told them that the two men seen in the canoe the previous day had just returned from trading with the people at the sea coast, and had brought a message to the guide from his brother-in-law, whom he expected to meet at the other end of the carrying-place, that he had a new axe for him, and that he had in his canoe a dressed moose-skin he was taking to the relative in payment. While this was all very agreeable, Mackenzie took care to set a watch over the guide so that he might not again escape. But not-

withstanding his precautions, he succeeded in leaving the camp.

It came about in this way. One of the hunters told Mackenzie that the blind man intended making his escape that night, Sunday, and offered to sit up with his leader. To this the explorer agreed, and, sitting in a darkened tent, they kept an eye on the old man. About midnight the old fellow began creeping on hands and knees towards the river. The others followed him noiselessly to the canoe, with which he would have gone away had he not been prevented. At first he protested he had only gone to the water to drink, but afterwards acknowledged the truth. The guide upbraided him for his conduct, and boasted that he himself "was not a woman," and would never run away through fear. Leaving Mackay in charge with strict injunctions to keep alert, Mackenzie retired to his tent to sleep. When he awoke next morning, however, the guide and his companion were gone. They had departed unseen by Mackay, and had told some of the men that they had gone on to their friends, and would wait at their camp for him.

That afternoon, July 1st, the canoe was completed, and the following morning at an early hour they embarked. As the old man did not wish to go any farther, or be conveyed to where he expected to find his friends, he was given a few pounds of pemmican and left on the island, which Mackenzie named Canoe Island. During their stay there the sand-flies and mosquitoes had caused them great annoyance, and, what still further displeased the voyageurs, all hands were placed on rations, and only two meals eaten a day. One of the meals consisted of pounded dried fish roes, boiled in water and thickened with flour. The roes they found in the lodges at Deserter's River. As they were about to start, Mackenzie gave the men a dram of rum each, which treat restored their equanimity, a commodity so easily disturbed.

In the forenoon they reached the Cottonwood Rapids.

The foreman, who had been alarmed on descending them, again showed signs of fear, and suggested carrying canoe and cargo past the place. Mackenzie ridiculed his fears, proposed taking the post of foreman himself, and pointed out that the water having fallen four feet since their previous visit, the force of the current was considerably lessened. It was decided to make the ascent on the west side, where the flow seemed less rapid, but it was soon discovered they could not manage without the line. Mackenzie sent two of the men with a line seventy fathoms in length to pass above the rocky cliffs, with instructions to attach one end of the line to a roll of bark, and let it float down the river. This was done, and the free end of the line attached to the canoe, which was then warped up. This operation was repeated, a portage made at two cascades, and the rapids thus cleared in two hours.

They had expected to fall in with some natives about that place, where they frequently resorted for fishing. The river seemed to be alive with salmon, which were everywhere leaping out of the water as they made their way against the swift current. No Indians were met with, however. An additional disappointment was experienced also when the hunters, who had been landed with Mackay before beginning the ascent of the rapids, came in empty-handed.

At ten o'clock next morning, July 3rd, they came to the river flowing in from the west which they had been told to ascend, and to which Mackenzie gave the name of West-Road River, marked on the maps as Blackwater River. The guide was not there. Again confronted by a grave situation, Mackenzie took his companions into his confidence: he told them this was the spot whence they were to start for the sea overland, and that he was determined to make the journey, even without the guide, should he fail to appear, which, however, he might yet do. To his pleasant surprise some of them at once fell in with his plan, while others suggested they should go

a farther distance up the river in expectation of meeting the guide or encountering some natives from whom another might be obtained. Mackenzie immediately agreed to the suggestion, but before leaving he sent some of the men into the woods to reconnoitre, while he examined the river in person. He found it only navigable for small canoes, and his men discovered a well-beaten trail leading into the interior.

Although Mackenzie does not express in his journal what was his state of mind at this juncture, he must have been highly elated at the thought that he would soon reach the Pacific Ocean. He deliberately turned his back upon the great river, as he calls the Fraser, by following which he had at first hoped to reach the coast (and which would have carried him there as readily as it afterwards did Simon Fraser had he persisted), and substituted in its place a journey through a region of which he knew nothing. He trusted entirely to what the Indians told him. They said he would reach the sea by that overland route, and he believed it would conduct him there. When, after ascending the Peace and its tributary, the Parsnip, he had arrived at the large river flowing towards the mid-day sun, he had thought that, beyond possible hostility from the natives, and such natural obstacles as "rapids and cascades," which he was accustomed to encounter on the waterways on the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, there would be no hindrance to a speedy realisation of the object he had set out to accomplish. But that hope having been dashed to the ground by the information supplied him recently by the natives, who had told him of the impassable impediments ahead of him did he continue to journey down the great river, he had abandoned the original route and adopted this new one, firm in the hope and belief of imminent success.

He knew of the position of the San Roque River as given by the Spaniards. He must have realised ere this

that the route he was now pursuing would take him to the sea south of that other and northerly river of the west which he had set out to find in the first instance. He must have further realised that he would not now be likely to fall in with Russian traders, and it is not unreasonable to presume that he expected to find this way would, if pushed to the extreme, carry him to Nootka. Perhaps he had some hope of participating in the trade in furs at that place, not on this voyage possibly, but ultimately. It is not difficult to conceive that in thus so jauntily undertaking the land journey he may have believed he was doing much more than finding a pathway to the Pacific Ocean; that, indeed, he was about to open up a trade route with Nootka that would prove remunerative to the North-West Company.

In detailing Mackenzie's route westward from the Fraser River, it is commonly held that he ascended the Blackwater—his West-Road River—in his canoe. The writer differs from that opinion. There is nothing in his narrative to indicate that he took his canoe up that stream. His journal entry of July 3rd makes this quite clear if carefully read. Mackenzie's words are: "At four in the afternoon we left this place, proceeding up the river." They were encamped at the mouth of the Blackwater, and the words "'this place" meant that camp, the starting-point that day. It has hitherto been stated that the words "up the river" have reference to the Blackwater. The writer, on the contrary, is firmly convinced that the Fraser River is indicated, and that Mackenzie simply continued his journey farther up the main stream he was then on.

When, earlier in the day, he had consulted with his men what their next move should be, some of them "suggested that it might be better to proceed a few leagues *farther* up the river, in expectation of finding our guide, or procuring another, and that after all we might return thither. This plan I agreed to, but before

I left this place, to which I gave the name of West-Road River, I . . . went some distance up the river myself, which I found navigable only for small canoes." Surely this can only mean one thing—namely, that, finding the Blackwater too shallow for their large canoe, they proposed to proceed—and did—farther up the Fraser. Mackenzie's own words must be heeded. He distinctly says that it was proposed they should "proceed a few leagues *farther* up the river." As they had not gone up the Blackwater, they could not go "farther" up a stream they had not ascended. They had, however, been ascending the Fraser, and the expression going "farther up" undoubtedly has reference to the Fraser and that only. Furthermore, inasmuch as they were agreed to journey westward to the sea, why, if the river they proposed to ascend were the Blackwater, should they speak of returning "hither"—*i.e.*, the mouth of that stream—instead of keeping right on? Assuming, however, that the Fraser River is intended, the reason for their return to the mouth of the Blackwater is readily accounted for. That was the place of rendezvous with their guide, and it was quite reasonable that they should return to that point if their excursion a "few leagues farther up the river" (the Fraser) failed to produce a guide.

Another and cogent reason against their ascending the Blackwater is the river itself. Mackenzie described it as "navigable only for small canoes," and his was a large one, twenty-five to thirty feet in length, and loaded with a cargo weighing fully a ton in addition to the weight of ten men in it. The Blackwater takes its rise in small lakes far to the west of its outlet into the Fraser. Its main source is about 53° N. latitude and 125° 49′ W. longitude, approximately three degrees west of its mouth. It receives in its course many affluents, the chief of which is the Nazco River, which joins it forty miles west of the Fraser, and whose own source is seventy miles south, and the Euchiniko River which flows in from the

north, rising in Chootanli Lake at an elevation of 3600 feet above sea-level.

At its mouth the valley of the Blackwater is gorge-like, which character it retains for a distance of twenty miles up-stream, the river in this part of its course flowing between perpendicular rocky cliffs more than one hundred feet high. This portion is known as Lower Blackwater Cañon. Farther west the rugged aspect of the valley gives place to one less severe, terraces or benches of glacial drift and silt, characteristic of so many valleys in the interior of British Columbia, being substituted for the rocky precipices of the lower reaches. The very appearance of the gorge at the mouth of the Blackwater must have warned Mackenzie against venturing too rashly into the frowning cañon. The safer and wiser plan—and he knew he must act circumspectly to preserve the lives of his companions and to preserve their supplies of provisions, now reduced to a perilously small quantity—was to keep to the Fraser until he obtained a guide. Additional reasons for believing that Mackenzie never ascended the Blackwater in his canoe will develop as this narrative proceeds.

Having decided to proceed farther up the Fraser they did so, and in less than an hour they fell in with two canoes coming down-stream. They contained the guide and half a dozen of his friends. They all landed, and the guide, who was attired in a handsome painted beaver robe that almost rendered him unrecognisable, immediately demanded an acknowledgment from Mackenzie that he had kept his promise. The explorer thought it politic to improve the occasion by presenting the fellow with a jacket, a pair of trousers, and a handkerchief. Every one being in good humour, they camped together for the night.

The natives accompanying the guide examined the white men with minute attention, and two of them, belonging to the band first seen at Deserter's River on

the occasion of their journey down the Fraser, told Mackenzie that they were so terrified at that time that they did not venture near their houses for two days afterwards, and that when they did so they found that the greater part of their property had been destroyed by fire, which had spread from a neglected camp fire. They told Mackenzie that they were "Nascud Denee," "though," comments the explorer, "I found no difference in their language from that of the Nagailas or Carriers."

Mackenzie was not familiar with the ethnology of the natives west of the Rocky Mountains nor of their final distribution, otherwise he would not have fallen into the several errors that occur in his observations in this connection. In speaking of the Indians with whom he sojourned before turning back up-stream to West-Road River, he gives a list of a few words in the languages "of the Nagailer or Atnah tribes." It is obvious on the face of it that the Nagailas encountered in company of the guide and the Nagailer of lower down the river are one and the same people, the name being differently spelled by Mackenzie. Nagailas is a self-bestowed nickname employed by the Takelne or Carrier tribe, which is widely distributed, extending over a territory including Alexandria in the south and the upper end of Stuart Lake in the north. This explains why Mackenzie could detect no difference in the language of the natives he was then with: they were all of the same tribe, but of separate bands or subdivisions, all speaking the same tongue.

The word "Dene," sometimes spelled "tinneh or tenne," and by Mackenzie given as Dinais, is not the name of a tribe. It means "people." Thus the term Nazku'tenne or Nazku'dene means the Nazku people, just as we speak of the English people or British people; and, like the British people, the Denes include several tribes or divisions. When, therefore, some of the Indians told Mackenzie they were "Nascud Dinais," they were

merely telling him that they were Nascu'denes or Natzu'-denes, which is the term applied to that branch of the Carriers or Takelne whose habitat is about Quesnelle and the mouth of the Blackwater, the locality where he then was. The term Atnah, used by Mackenzie, is not the name of either tribe or band. It is a word meaning "stranger" or "foreigner," the term being applied to any other tribe save their own. Thus the Shuswaps, Lillooets, and Chilcotins were all Atnahs or foreigners to the Carriers or Nagailas, to use Mackenzie's own expression. The Carriers at his turning-back place, Alexandria, are Lthau'dene, and those occupying the basin of the Blackwater and along its course are the Nutca'dene, although Mackenzie calls them by another name.

There is a considerable amount of difficulty in representing in printed characters the vocal sounds emitted by the Indians, whose gutturals and explosives are by no means easy of rendition. So much depends upon the ear of the listener. One endowed with an acute sense of hearing will better grasp the sound of the spoken word than one whose hearing is less keen. This accounts for the substitution of "t" for "d" in the word Dene when it is rendered as tenne or tinneh, and for other differences and variations in spelling employed by those who attempt to reproduce in type the spoken word of the natives.

Early on the following morning, July 4th, they all proceeded to the landing-place from which ran the trail to the lodges inhabited by the friends of the guide, that being declared to be the shortest road. By sending Mackay on ahead with the guides and his companions, Mackenzie was enabled to make a cache of part of their provisions—ninety pounds of pemmican, two bags of wild rice, and a gallon keg of gunpowder. In a second cache they placed two bags of maize and a bale of various goods. Both caches were well concealed. Following in the canoe the others who had gone on ahead, they found them awaiting their arrival at the mouth of a small

rivulet. There the canoe was taken out of the water and placed upon a staging erected for the purpose, shading it from the sun with branches of trees. In a low hut made of green logs they deposited all the goods they did not require to take with them on the overland journey.

At noon all their preparations were completed, and the long tramp began. They were well weighed down, for they had to carry four hundred pounds of pemmican, Mackenzie's instruments, a parcel of goods for presents weighing ninety pounds, and an equal weight of ammunition. Each of the Canadian voyageurs carried on his back a pack weighing ninety pounds, in addition to gun and ammunition. The two Indian hunters carried forty-five pounds of pemmican each, and grumbled greatly thereat, while Mackenzie and Mackay were each burdened with a pack of seventy pounds, Mackenzie in addition having his telescope slung across his shoulders.

Thus encumbered, they plunged into a rugged timbered country, hitherto unknown to and untrodden by civilised men. A steep ascent of about a mile at the outset led them away from the valley of the Fraser, and, gaining the heights, conducted them by a well-defined trail over a rough ridgy country. As if the heat of the day and the toil of the journey with such heavy loads upon their backs were not trials enough, it began to rain, and even when it ceased, the dripping from the trees increased their already sufficient discomfort.

In the first afternoon's tramp they covered twelve miles before camping for the night at an Indian encampment of three fires, where they found their elusive guide comfortably established among his friends. At sunset four other natives joined the party, one of whom, an elderly man, carried a lance resembling a sergeant's halberd, which he said he had received in trade from the coast Indians, who had obtained it from white men. According to this person, eight days' march would suffice to reach the coast, and he generously promised to send

two young men in advance to prepare the natives for the coming of Mackenzie and his party. The explorer bestowed small presents upon the couriers with the hope of enlisting their good offices.

The natives with whom Mackenzie passed that night were unable to sell any provisions to the travellers, a few dried fish being their sole provender. They were well supplied, however, with several articles of European manufacture, and one of them had a strip of sea-otter fur, which he sold to Mackenzie for some beads and a brass cross.

Tired out with the toilsome journey of the day, the travellers lay down to rest, and slept soundly, with no fear of those with whom they were for the time being associated. No sooner had they retired to rest than the Indians began to sing in a manner very different from anything Mackenzie had heard before. "It was not accompanied either with dancing, drum, or rattle, but consisted of soft plaintive tones, and a modulation that was rather agreeable. It had somewhat the air of church music," is how the explorer described it.

On the following morning, Friday, July 5th, when requested to prepare to take the trail again, the guide coolly informed Mackenzie that he did not intend to accompany the expedition any farther, offering as his reason for his defection the statement that as the two young men who had consented to go on ahead to herald the approach of the strangers knew the country, they would answer the purpose just as well! Mackenzie had by this time taken the measure of the fellow, and knew him to be one of those capricious beings with whom to argue would be useless waste of time, and perhaps this assumed indifference accomplished what reasoning or a tirade of abuse would have failed to bring about.

Contenting himself with telling this changeful man that one of his people had lost his dagger, Mackenzie asked him to endeavour to recover it. What follows is

told by Mackenzie in a few words: "He asked me what I would give him to conjure it back again, and a knife was agreed to be the price of his necromantic exertions. Accordingly all the dags and knives in the place were gathered together, and the natives formed a circle around them, the conjurer also remaining in the middle. When this part of the ceremony was arranged, he began to sing, the rest joining in the chorus; and after some time he produced the poignard, which was stuck in the ground, and returned it to me."

To Mackenzie's surprise, when they were all ready to start, the vacillating guide again changed his mind, and announced his intention of resuming his office, and did as far as a small lake, where they found another native camp of three families. There Mackenzie exchanged two copper coins, halfpence, "one of his present Majesty, and the other of the State of Massachusetts Bay, coined in 1787. They hung as ornaments in children's ears." He was glad to leave that camp, inasmuch as the men there declared that his two hunters belonged to a tribe inhabiting the mountains who are their natural enemies, and one of the natives showed a scar as proof that one of their relatives had stabbed him!

Following the shore of a lake about three and a half miles in length, they crossed a creek and entered upon a worn trail through an open country with scattered trees. Two more lakes were passed later in the day, as well as several "winter huts." The two young men who were acting as guides carried no burden save their beaver-skin robes and bows and arrows, yet when they were asked to relieve one of the men who had a violent pain in his knee of part of his encumbrance, they pretended not to understand. A deluge of rain obliged them to camp on the banks of the last of the lakes they had come to. To ensure the guides would not leave the party in the lurch, Mackenzie suggested that the youngest one should sleep with him, to which he readily consented. "These people,"

says the explorer, "have no covering but their beaver garments, and that of my companion was a nest of vermin. I, however, spread it under us, and having laid down upon it, we covered ourselves with my camblet cloak. My companion's hair being greased with fish-oil and his body smeared with red earth, my sense of smell, as well as that of feeling, threatened to interrupt my rest; but these inconveniences yielded to my fatigue, and I passed a night of sound repose."

Taking the lead in the march, as he had done the day before, "in order to clear the branches of the wet," Mackenzie set the pace through a level country with but little undergrowth, and at half-past eight in the morning of the 6th they came to the trail which they had first intended to have taken from the great river (the Fraser), and which Mackenzie thought "must be shorter than that which he had travelled." The trail alluded to is that discovered by his men at the mouth of the Blackwater, and this reference to it in this way proves conclusively that Mackenzie did not take the Blackwater trail but another and more circuitous one. "The West-Road River was also in sight," continues the explorer, "winding through a valley. . . . There appeared to be more water in the river here than at its discharge. The Indian account that it is navigable for their canoes is, I believe, correct." Here again is additional proof that Mackenzie did not ascend the Blackwater in his canoe. Now for the first time since leaving its mouth they came in sight of it, and his comments upon its depth at that point as compared with that at its outlet can be explained in no other way but that he had had no previous opportunity of putting to the test what the natives had told him about its navigability.

The two guides now informed Mackenzie that as the trail was good and well-defined, they would go in advance and inform the next band of their approach. He suggested that one of them should remain with him, and

that two of the voyageurs should go on with the other; but this they would not hear of, and immediately took their departure. Instructing one of his hunters to lay aside his pack and take only arms and blanket and follow him, Mackenzie hastened after the guides, bidding his men travel as quickly as possible. Mackenzie and his companion overtook the two guides at a camp of a native family, a man, his two wives, and six children. One of the women was a native of the coast, corpulent, face oblong, flattened nose. She wore a tunic and a robe of matted bark, fringed round the bottom with sea-otter skin, had bracelets of brass, copper, and horn, and was decorated with beads in her hair, ears, and about her neck, presenting an appearance different from any seen among the women west of the Rocky Mountains. She confirmed the statement that the sea was not far distant. These people were on the way to the Fraser to fish for salmon.

Soon the other members of the party arrived, and after a short rest the march was resumed. The elder of the two guides, however, refused to go any farther, but said a boy, one of the family they were then with, would accompany his brother, Mackenzie considering himself fortunate that they did not all desert him. Two hours after leaving the camp they fell in with two native families, who, after the boy had spoken to them, received the travellers hospitably. Mackenzie, with an eye to the charms of the gentler sex, observed that one of the women had a tattooed line along the chin. It was now the turn of the two boy guides to decline to go any farther, but they told Mackenzie that the two men, the heads of the families, could act as guides; and as one of them resided among the coast Indians, doubtless the exchange occasioned little or no regret. This man stated that they were nearing a river which discharged into a bay of the sea, where in the spring "a great wooden canoe, with white people, arrives," a reference to a vessel of one of the maritime traders.

After leaving the encampment with the two new guides, the party encountered an uneven trail over a hilly and swampy country strewn with fallen timber. A heavy downpour of rain drove them to camp at five in the afternoon, and Mackenzie became so engrossed in questioning the guides that he forgot to wind his watch, "the only instance of such an act of negligence since I left Fort Chipewyan on the 11th of last October," he explains apologetically. To what must have been his extreme personal discomfort, and for the same reasons as before, he again shared his bed with one of the guides.

So far, the trail taken by the expedition was much the same as that used by the Indians to-day. From the Fraser it follows the general direction of the Blackwater, but at a distance from it to avoid the Lower Cañon, only coming in contact with the river again at a point several miles above the upper end of the cañon, where the bench formation replaces the rocky defiles. Continuing along the valley, which opens out considerably, forming a wide, flat-bottomed, well-wooded area, the trail leads to the Euchiniko River, and at that point the Blackwater, which has run in an east to west direction, turns sharply to the south, and, after proceeding in that direction some ten or twelve miles, receives the waters of the Nazco River, its most considerable affluent, and immediately makes another sharp bend in a north-westerly direction. To save the longer journey around the bend, the trail follows along the Euchiniko valley a short distance, and then crosses the ridge between it and the Blackwater, again falling upon the latter near longitude 124°, where the river gradually veers towards the south. This trail Mackenzie followed, and he refers to crossing the ridge between the Euchiniko and the Blackwater in his entry of July 7th: "and proceeded across two mountains covered with spruce, poplar, white birch, and other trees. We then descended into a level country, where we found a good road, through woods of

cypress. We then came to two small lakes. . . . Through them the river passes, and our road kept in a parallel line with it on a range of elevated ground."

On this trail they met a native family, and later in the day fell in with another and larger party, consisting of seven men, as many women, and several children. From them a new guide was obtained. Three hours later, at six in the evening, they crossed the Blackwater, which was knee-deep at the fording place and a hundred yards wide. At the urgent solicitation of the new guide, Mackenzie pushed on until, at half-past seven, they came to the lodge of his friends, by whom the travellers were hospitably received and presented with some dried fish.

One of the characteristics of the Blackwater is its frequent expansion into lake-like bodies of water. From its junction with the Nazco westward it expands at numerous points into long narrow lakes, the principal of which are the Kluscoil, Euchiniko, Cushya, and Tsa-cha. It receives tributary streams from the Clus-cus lakes and from the Tse-tzi, Klooch-oot-a, and Tsil-bé-kuz lakes. West of the latter it bears the name of Uhl-ga-ko River, which flows through a series of lakes, the largest being the Eliguck at an elevation of 3575 feet. In fact, the whole of this section of the interior of British Columbia is studded with lakes, which increase in area towards the north, and vary in size from a small pond to beautiful sheets of water up to a hundred and more miles in length.

The lodge near which Mackenzie camped that night of July 7th was on the banks of one of the smaller expansions of the Blackwater. It rained so heavily that it was not until eight o'clock in the morning of the 8th that they felt disposed to resume the journey, after a breakfast of boiled fish supplied by their courteous hosts, and served on platters of bark. At two o'clock in the afternoon they "arrived at the largest river that they had seen since leaving the Fraser," and which forced its way between and over the huge stones that opposed its

current." Following a south-south-west course, they journeyed "sixteen miles along the river, which might here justify the title of a lake." This "largest" so-called river is another expansion of the Blackwater, Euchiniko Lake. The trail being good, they pushed on despite the rain which fell during the greater part of the day, and, after covering an additional ten miles, they encamped for the night by the side of the lake—or river, as Mackenzie called it. Mackenzie formed the opinion that the "river" was a new one altogether. Referring to it, he says: "This river abounds with fish, and must fall into the great river farther down than we had extended our voyage." No doubt the sharp and long sweep to the south made by the Blackwater misled him. He did not long labour under his erroneous impression, however, for, upon taking an observation two days later, he found the latitude to be 53° 4′ 32″ N., "being not so far south as I expected," he comments.

Owing to the marked absence of game in that district, Mackenzie thought it best to make some provision for the return journey, and on the morning of the 9th, Tuesday, having first taken the precaution to send on ahead all his companions except two voyageurs, he concealed half a bag of pemmican by burying it under the ashes of the camp fire, thus being assured of sustenance that might be sorely needed when they returned.

The trail followed the north shore of Euchiniko Lake for some distance, and at five o'clock in the afternoon they arrived at a place where the water contracted to a width of only ninety feet. There, opposite the confluence of the Clus-cus creek, which flows from the south-west out of the Clus-cus lakes, they found a raft, by whose means the natives were accustomed to make the crossing. There they camped for the night, and ferried the lake the next morning, five trips being required to take them all across. On the south side of the lake they picked up the trail, which conducted them southward along the creek

for about half a mile, and then turned westward along the northern shore of the Clus-cus lakes. The lower lake is six miles in length, and is separated by a stream of about a mile and a half long from the upper lake, which is only half the length of the lower, but slightly wider. Clus-cus creek is about twenty feet wide and two feet deep in high water, and has a drop of forty feet from the lower lake to Euchiniko Lake, a fall of one foot in ten. On the banks of the lower lake Mackenzie found two Indian houses, temporarily vacant, "that occupied a most delightful situation." At a much later date the Hudson's Bay Company had a small trading post at that point, which was for a long time a rendezvous of the natives for an extended radius. It is a pretty spot, the country along the north side sloping gently with an undulating surface to the water, and dotted with groves of aspen poplars and spruce where not covered with a luxuriant growth of grass.

Continuing on their way they came at the west end of the first lake to two lodges, where they found thirteen men, who, says Mackenzie, "called themselves Slouа-Cuss-Dinais," which he understood to mean Red-Fish Men. They were cleaner, more healthy-looking, and more agreeable than any of the natives the travellers had passed. Mackenzie correctly believed them to belong to the same tribe, the Carriers. Some of them told him it would take four more days to reach the sea, others fixed the time at six days, while still others said eight days would be found necessary.

On the 4th of the month Mackenzie had been told by the natives with whom he camped on that first night after leaving the Fraser that eight days' travel would suffice to take him to the sea. It was the 10th when they were at Clus-cus lakes; they had been six days on the trail, and yet they were, according to these people, still the same number of days of travel from their goal. This unreliability, or perhaps it would be more charitable to

say the lack of preciseness, is characteristic of the Indian. What does a day or two more or less matter since time is so abundant and so cheap!

Observing some huts about a mile away, Mackenzie visited them, accompanied by one of his men, one of his hunters to act as interpreter, and the guide. The occupants received their visitors hospitably, and presented them with a dish of boiled trout. While there the guide informed Mackenzie he could not go any farther with him, and the explorer promptly engaged two of the natives, his hosts, to take his place. At four o'clock in the afternoon the journey was resumed, "by the side of the lake, till six, when we came to the end of it. We then struck off through a much less beaten track." After leaving the Clus-cus lakes the trail cut across country to Cushya River, the Indian name of which is Tsan-tsed-a-ko, a small stream fifteen feet wide and knee-deep, with a swift current, which empties into the Blackwater above Cushya Lake. Between the lake and the mouth of Cushya River the Blackwater descends at a leap of fifteen feet over a bed of grey columnar basalt. The waterfall is curtain-like, with water of a dark amber colour.

They passed a miserable night, tormented with flies during the earlier part, and afterwards deluged with rain. Night after night rain had poured down upon the scantily sheltered men, soaking their garments, wetting them to the skin. Morning after morning they had disrobed and dried their dripping clothing before the camp fire. This they were obliged to do on the morning of the 11th ere they could proceed. The trail conducted them through a morass, and as that part of the country had been swept by fire their progress was incommoded by fallen timber and half-burnt logs, which cumbered the ground. "A high rocky ridge stretched along our left," observes Mackenzie. This ridge lies to the south of the trail, the northern front of a basaltic

plateau appearing as a low broken cliff of columnar basalt.

At half-past three in the afternoon they "came in sight of a lake," the land at the same time gradually rising to a range of mountains whose tops were covered with snow. This is Tsa-cha Lake, the name meaning great stone or mountain, having reference to the rocky hill on its northern shore. The trail follows the south side of the lake for three miles, crossing three streams in that distance, the largest being about ten feet wide and two deep, with a fall of one in ten. Altogether that day Mackenzie's party crossed "seven rivulets and a creek." At intervals it rained, and at five o'clock they were all so wet and cold that they were constrained to stop for the night. Then came a recurrence of the old trouble: the guides complained of the haste made, and threatened to leave them, and, to make matters worse, Mackenzie's own Indians, the interpreters and hunters, expressed their dissatisfaction; and to render the lives of these pertinacious travellers still more uncomfortable, their leader decided, in view of the distance from the sea being farther than he had been led to believe, that another cut must be made in the rations, which were accordingly reduced to two-thirds of their present allowance.

On the 12th, again taking the trail, they came to Tse-tzi Lake, a mile long, eight miles beyond Tsa-cha Lake, and after passing several small ponds, a short distance farther on to Klootch-oota Lake, a mile and a half in length and discharging into the former. Between these two lakes the trail to Bella Coola turns off, but Mackenzie did not take it, keeping straight on, through swampy meadows of considerable size. About a mile beyond Klootch-oota Lake they came to Tsil-be-kuz (sometimes called Cultus Coolee) Lake, "and soon reached a river, which our guide informed us was the same that we had passed on a raft. . . . At this place it was upwards of

twenty yards across, and deep water. One of the guides swam over to fetch a raft which was on the opposite side, and having increased its dimensions, we crossed at two trips, except four of the men, who preferred swimming." This was indeed no other than the Blackwater again, which here, after receiving a small stream that flows into it from Tsil-be-kuz Lake, swings abruptly southwards, making a hook-shaped bend, enclosing this and the other lakes before named. Where they found the raft is known as the Third Crossing, and there the Blackwater, instead of flowing in a deep valley as before, is found almost on a level with the general surface of the plateau, whose altitude is about 3500 feet. Mackenzie made the crossing at the time of high water. Later in the season the river may be forded easily. From the north bank, to which they crossed, a good view is obtained of the Il-ga-Chuz range of mountains, whose peaks have an elevation of 7000 feet above the sea.

Mackenzie again experienced trouble with his guides, who threatened to desert, and only by the gift of presents and the promise of more were they induced to continue their services. This difficulty disposed of, the march was resumed, the trail continuing westward along the valley of the Uhl-ga-ko River, an important tributary of the Blackwater. Once more the conduct of the guides caused some alarm, for they hurried on ahead so rapidly that the burdened men could not overtake them. This was done, however, by one of the interpreters, to whom they explained that they were only hastening to apprise some natives farther on of the approach of the strangers.

That night they camped at seven o'clock, and as they were gathering firewood, "a cross-road" was discovered that bore signs of having been recently used by a number of people. Intense excitement followed this discovery, and was only alleviated by the persuasive tongue of the explorer. Mackenzie estimated they had travelled at least thirty-six miles that day over a barren stony country

that lay in ridges with swamps intervening, a trail that tested the endurance of the hardy travellers to the utmost. It must be remembered that these men carried heavy loads day after day. A pack of seventy to ninety pounds is no light burden under any circumstances, but when it is there every day and all day, rain or shine, up and down hill, none but those inured to the work can withstand the terrific strain on heart and muscle.

On the 13th they sighted a house by the side of the Uhl-ga-ko, which is some fifteen feet wide and two feet deep—a sluggish stream. Being in advance of the others of the party, Mackenzie had almost reached it ere the inmates perceived him. Instantly all was confusion. The women and children cried out in alarm, while the only man made good his escape by the back door, which Mackenzie reached just in time to prevent the other occupants from following his example. A few presents relieved the anxiety of the women and their charges. Presently the cowardly head of the household ventured to show himself at the edge of the wood in which he had taken refuge. After some coaxing he returned to the house, and ultimately agreed to show them the way to the sea. These people had some fish-traps set in the river, from which the travellers obtained a welcome supply of fresh fish. An observation taken at noon showed their position to be 52° 58′ 53″ N. latitude. Perhaps the most welcome information obtained from these natives was told by one of the women, "that from the mountains before us, which were covered with snow, the sea was visible."

Leaving this camp at seven in the morning of the 14th, with the man and his two sons as guides, Mackenzie and his companions again took the trail, "and proceeded along a lake west five miles." This was Eliguck, or Uhl-ghak Lake, whose length is three miles, and has a rather prominent rocky hill on its north bank. "We then crossed a small river," says Mackenzie, the stream being

the same Uhl-ga-ko, flowing into the lake they had just left. Gaining the summit of a hill, they enjoyed an extended view to the south-east, from which direction "a considerable river appeared to flow at the distance of about three miles." As the only river of any consequence in that direction is the Salmon River, it was probably that stream to which the explorer referred, although the distance from the hill is greater than that he mentions. From another hill they obtained a view of the coast ranges, whose peaks were covered with snow.

Passing Malaput Lake, and crossing a small stream flowing out of it into Gatcho Lake, at one in the afternoon they came to a house more carefully built than any they had yet seen since leaving Forks Fort, of logs, squared on two sides and with a long ridge-pole projecting eight or ten feet beyond the gable, the end of the pole being carved to represent a snake's head. Inside the house Mackenzie observed carved figures and hieroglyphics painted red. Near at hand were some graves, each marked by a painted pole. The carving and painting indicate the influence of the Indians of the coast, whose artistic carving and painting of the totem poles found at every coast native village are so well known to all who have visited the north-west coast. Within a short distance of the house a weir thrown across the stream gave accommodation to fish-traps, which were always an object of interest to the explorer. Dr G. M. Dawson of the Canadian Geological Survey, who visited Gatcho Lake in 1876, saw both the house and the graves, and says of the former, "the house being the best built of any I have seen in the interior, and though repaired for a great potlatch this summer, bearing marks of very considerable antiquity."

The "hills" crossed by Mackenzie after leaving Eliguk Lake are part of an elevated ridge (summit 3730 feet) which forms the watershed separating the head-waters of the Blackwater from those of the Nechaco to the north

and from the Salmon River to the south and west, a few miles only lying between the sources of these several streams. Out of the Malaput and Gatcho lakes, together with several smaller ones, flows the Uhl-ghat River, a large tributary of the Entiaco, one of the larger feeders of the Nechaco River which empties into the Fraser at Fort George. Salmon River comes from the south in close proximity to the sources of the Bella Coola, and receives several affluents, one of which is shown on the maps under several names, Takia, Tanyabunkut, or Tai-a-taeszi River. It is with this branch that we are at present most concerned. Both the Salmon River and the Bella Coola empty their waters into the Pacific, the former into Dean Channel at its head, the latter into the North Bentinck Arm.

Leaving the house on Gatcho Lake, they crossed the Uhl-ghat, which was the river where they saw the weir and fish-traps, and, proceeding nine miles along a good trail, came to a small lake and a river running out of it, a small feeder of the Salmon River. At nine o'clock that night they crossed the Salmon River on rafts and then camped, thoroughly exhausted after a hard day, but greatly encouraged and heartened by the assurance of their guides that two days more of similar exertion would bring them to the country of the coast Indians.

The following forenoon, Monday, 15th, they were on the way again at five o'clock, following the course of a stream which they eventually forded, knee-deep. An hour before noon they fell in with a party of natives, consisting of five men and their families, who received them in a friendly spirit, and examined them with interest. "They must have been told that we were white," remarks Mackenzie, "as our faces no longer indicated that distinguishing complexion. They called themselves Neguia Dinais, and were come in a different direction from us, but were now going the same way, to the Anah-yoe Tesse

or River, and appeared to be very much satisfied with our having joined them."

Mackenzie expected that his guides would leave him now that he had made friends with these other natives, but, contrary to his expectations, they said they were so happy in their present company that they would spend another night with them.

Mackenzie was very favourably impressed with the personal appearance of their new travelling companions, which contrasted favourably with that of other natives they had previously met. The hair of the women was neatly parted in the middle and plaited and loosely knotted over the ears, some of them using beads as hair ornaments. The men were clad in buckskin, wore their hair nicely combed, and had fairer complexions or cleaner faces than the general run of Indians. Instead of dark eyes, theirs were grey with a tinge of red. One of the men was over six feet in height, possessed of affable manners, and an unusually prepossessing appearance. He was about twenty-eight years of age, and was treated with marked respect by his associates. Each man, woman, and child carried a burden of furs and dressed deer-skins, which latter they had procured from the Sekenais, or Rocky Mountain Indians. They told Mackenzie that the sea-coast Indians prefer the moose-skins to all others, and that some of their own people had preceded them to the coast to barter their furs with the natives there, who in their turn trade them for goods brought by white men in ships.

Mackenzie was pleased to have fallen in with such pleasant and useful companions, and did not regret in the least the more leisurely rate of progress the presence of the women and children entailed, and all hands were delighted to have the assurance of these people that they would reach the end of their journey in three days.

"Huy! huy!" cried the leader of their new friends, when, after a rest and the full discussion of their plans

had been enjoyed, he gave the signal to resume the march. Passing over a winding trail across hills and marshes and a narrow river, they encamped at five in the afternoon by the side of a lake, after, so far as Mackenzie's party was concerned, a comparatively easy day's journey of twenty miles. No sooner was camp made than the guide and one of the new band of natives engaged in gambling, of which all Indians are passionately fond. The game consisted of concealing in a bundle of dry grass an unstated number of small pieces of polished wood about the size of quills. Each took turns in rolling up the sticks, the other guessing the number, and if correct he was declared the winner, or conversely, the loser. The guide lost, and forfeited his bow and arrows and several articles given him by Mackenzie.

With the stupidity characteristic of too many people who labour under the idea that it is "smart" to make offensive remarks, one of the voyageurs came within an ace of destroying the *entente cordiale*. One of the strangers, impelled by a very natural curiosity, asked a number of questions about the white men and their country, to which the voyageur in question gave such replies as were not credited by the natives, and when they told him so, the fellow angrily demanded whether they took him for a liar, like the Sekenais. As one of that tribe was among the Indians, he quickly resented the insult, and a lively quarrel ensued. Fortunately some of the others intervened, and restored peace before it had reached a stage that might have been attended with serious consequences.

Next morning the natives seemed in no hurry to resume the journey, and would have delayed much longer had not Mackenzie urged them to proceed, giving as his reason a shortage of provisions. When the march was resumed, he left two men behind to cache a further supply of pemmican, about twenty pounds weight, in anticipation of their return.

After proceeding two miles, to the end of the lake, to his dismay the natives told Mackenzie that they had changed their plans, and instead of accompanying him to the sea they would proceed thither by following another stream which flowed out of the lake. "It was my wish," says Mackenzie, "to continue with them whatever way they went, but neither my promises or entreaties would avail . . . and when I represented the low state of our provisions, one of them answered that if we would stay with them all night, he would boil a kettle of fish-roes for us. Accordingly, without receiving any answer, he began to make preparation to fulfil his engagement."

The roes were bruised between two stones and soaked in water. A fire being made, stones were placed in it to heat, while the man's wife squeezed the roes through a handful of dried grass, and poured them into a vessel nearly full of water. When the stones were heated they were one by one dropped into the vessel until the contents boiled, the woman stirring them the while till the mess thickened. The stones were then taken out, and a quantity of rancid oil added. Mackenzie could not eat the preparation, but his men had no difficulty in disposing of it.

While they were thus engaged four natives, of whose arrival the others were in expectation, joined them. They belonged to two tribes not before known to the explorer, and, after some discussion, they suggested that he should divert his route to pass their residences. The guide, however, told him that to do so would lengthen his journey, and his object being to reach the sea-coast as speedily as possible, he prevailed upon them to guide him along the route already marked out for him. They had no hesitation in accepting his proposal, and pointed out to him the pass through which he would travel.

In view of their friendly attitude towards Mackenzie, it is difficult to understand why the Indians refused to allow him to accompany them to Salmon River. Had

he done so he would have reached Dean Channel instead of Bentinck Arm, though at no great saving of either distance or labour.

At four in the afternoon Mackenzie and his men, with the new guides, bade the friendly Indians good-bye, and immediately forded the Takia River, at that point about twenty feet wide only, to the south bank. Turning southward, at right angles to their former course, they entered the woods, and soon forded another stream, Tsul-tel-ako River. Trudging laboriously through swamps and over fire-swept forest land, they soon began to climb towards the pass over Tsi-tsul mountain, continuing the ascent until nine o'clock at night. Since crossing the Takia that afternoon they had tramped fourteen miles, although in a straight line the distance would not be more than ten.

Low as was the stock of provisions, another portion of pemmican was concealed before leaving camp on the 17th, in the same manner as before, in a hole dug under the ashes of the camp fire. Mackenzie ever kept in mind the necessity of providing for the return journey. Little as they had then, they might have still less when they made their retreat. It was owing to the lack of such forethought that disaster attended Franklin's first land expedition to the Arctic.

Taking the trail before sunrise, they "descended into a beautiful valley watered by a small river," the Kohasganko, but soon began to ascend again. The guides killed several ground hogs (the American marmot, *Arctomys monax*), which they skinned, retaining the pelts and giving the flesh to the travellers. They also dug up the tuberous roots of the *Claytonia sessifolia*, which when cooked "had the colour and taste of a potato." Still ascending, they at last reached the summit of the pass. Before them rose a "stupendous mountain, whose snow-clad peak was lost in the clouds." The mountain, called by the natives Chil-a-thlum-dinky, was on the south side of the Bella Coola River, to which they were going, and which

they would reach by the Kahylktst River, now known locally as Burnt Bridge Creek, which empties into the Bella Coola from the north. All about them was snow which had drifted into the pass, and in it they saw tracks of deer. The guides and Mackenzie's Indian hunters immediately went in pursuit. During their absence a violent storm of wind, with hail, snow, and rain, drove the travellers to such shelter as the lee side of a large rock might afford. The hunters brought back from the chase a doe, and as soon as sufficient dry wood could be gathered to make a fire, some of the venison was cooked, and all enjoyed a heartier and more satisfying meal than they had partaken of for many a day.

Taking advantage of the stop, Mackenzie shaved the beard he had allowed to grow, and changed his linen, the men following "the humanising example." Resuming the trail, they came to a small pond, near which they had their first view of a totem pole, erected beside a grave, on which "two figures of birds were painted, and by them the guides distinguished the tribe to which the deceased person belonged."

The late Dr Dawson of the Geological Survey of Canada defined in 1876 the greater part of the route followed by Mackenzie after leaving the Fraser River, and another portion, that over the Tsi-Tsutl Mountains, was located by Captain R. P. Bishop during survey operations in 1923.

The trail descended rapidly into the valley below, and from a height, what Mackenzie terms a precipice, the river lay at their feet and on its banks a native village. In two hours they reached the bottom of the valley, and were at once sensible of a total change of climate, owing to the change in altitude and nearness to the sea. The sun was about to set when the guides, not being hampered with heavy packs, left the party to follow as best they might, and hastened to the village, indicating the trail by breaking of branches of the trees as they passed.

Darkness fell, and it became exceedingly difficult to make any progress owing to the dense growth and masses of rock, which they could pass only by wading in the stream. Clearing the dense wood at last they continued with greater ease, and soon had the satisfaction of arriving at the village, called Nutleig by the natives, and which Mackenzie named Friendly Village on his return journey, at the confluence of the Kahylktst River with the Bella Coola River. Thither the four guides had preceded them, and prepared the way for their arrival.

The manner of reception there given the travellers is best told by quoting Mackenzie's own words: "I arrived at a house, and soon discovered several fires, in small huts, with people busily employed in cooking their fish. I walked into one of them without the least ceremony, threw down my burden, and, after shaking hands with some of the people, sat down upon it. They received me without the least appearance of surprise, but soon made signs for me to go up to the larger house, which was erected on upright posts at some distance from the ground. A broad piece of timber with steps cut in it led to the scaffolding even with the floor, and by this curious kind of ladder I entered the house at one end, and having passed three fires, at equal distances in the middle of the building, I was received by several people, sitting upon a very wide board, at the upper end of it. I shook hands with them, and seated myself beside a man the dignity of whose countenance induced me to give him that preference. I soon discovered one of my guides seated a little above me, with a mat spread before him, which I supposed to be the place of honour, and appropriated to strangers.

"In a short time my people arrived, and placed themselves near me, when the man by whom I sat immediately rose and fetched . . . a quantity of roasted salmon. He then directed a mat to be placed before me and Mr Mackay, who was now sitting by me. When this ceremony was

performed, he brought a salmon for each of us, and half a one to each of my men."

Mackenzie ordered his men, after they had eaten, to make a fire outside, "that we might sleep by it. When he (the master of the house) observed our design, he placed boards for us, that we might not take our repose on the bare ground, and ordered a fire to be prepared for us. We had not been long seated round it when we received a large dish of salmon roes, pounded fine and beat up with water, so as to have the appearance of a cream. Nor was it without some kind of seasoning that gave it a bitter taste. Another dish soon followed, the principal article of which was also salmon roes, with a large proportion of gooseberries, and a herb that appeared to be sorrel. Its acidity rendered it more agreeable to my taste than the former preparation. Having been regaled with these delicacies, for such they were considered by that hospitable spirit that provided them, we laid ourselves down to rest, with no other canopy than the sky, but I never enjoyed a more sound and refreshing rest, though I had a board for my bed and a billet for my pillow."

When Mackenzie awoke next morning, 18th, he found that the villagers had lighted a fire for their guests, and as soon as the host saw he was awake, he brought him a breakfast of berries and roasted salmon and dried fish roes. His fellows followed his example, and the travellers broke their fast plentifully. A weir built across the stream, which was fifty yards wide, obliged the ascending salmon to leap over the obstruction, and such as fell back were caught in traps set beneath it, thus ensuring the villagers an abundant food-supply during the season.

It required some persuasion to induce the friendly host to provide canoes for the party, until Mackenzie discovered that it was the carrying of venison in the vessel that was the cause of hesitation, the natives holding the superstitious belief that the salmon would smell the flesh and

abandon the river. This difficulty was promptly removed by presenting the offending meat to a visiting Indian whose gustatory prejudices did not extend to roast venison. Two canoes were produced, and in them the travellers placed their effects, and embarking, committed themselves to the current.

Prior to their departure, fifteen armed men, who, being at a distance when the four guides had reached the village to herald the coming of the white men, had immediately been sent for, arrived at Friendly Village. They were of the same tribe, and had the same customs, dress, and personal appearance. Such garments as they wore, chiefly a robe tied over the shoulders, were made of shredded cedar bark, sometimes with strips of sea-otter fur interwoven. High cheek-bones, most marked in the women, a general inclination to corpulence, and grey eyes were their physical characteristics. The women wore the hair short, the men plaited theirs. Mackenzie found the latitude of the village to be 52° 28′ 11″ N. A few presents to his host and others who had shown them kindnesses were made before embarkation.

It was one o'clock in the afternoon when the two canoes left Friendly Village. The current ran at a velocity of six miles an hour, and bore them seaward at a great rate. Coming to a fishing weir the natives who were in charge of the canoes landed their passengers, and then took the vessels over the dam without shipping a drop of water; and Mackenzie says, in admiration of the dexterity shown on this and subsequent occasions by the natives of that district in the management of their canoes: "I had imagined that the Canadians who accompanied me were the most expert canoe-men in the world, but they are very inferior to these people, as they themselves acknowledged, in conducting those vessels."

A run of two hours and a half took them to near a village which was known to the Indians as Nusk'Elot, and is situated at the mouth of Tsatleanootz River. The

natives with them told the travellers to land and walk to it. This they did, with their packs on their backs, and, following their guides along a well-marked trail, were soon apprised of the arrival of their heralds at the village by the sound of loud talking that reached their ears. As soon as Mackenzie appeared in the open and the villagers saw him and his companions, they ran from house to house, arming themselves with bows and arrows, spears or axes. Nothing daunted by these hostile signs, Mackenzie boldly walked up to the houses, and many of the villagers, seeing this resolution, laid down their weapons and went to meet the new-comers. Mackenzie shook hands with those nearest to him, and while so engaged an elderly man broke through the crowd surrounding him and took him in his arms. His son and others followed this example, and afterwards Mackenzie learned those embraces were tokens of regard and friendship. So closely did the natives throng about him that he could not move forward, but presently an opening was made, and a young man, another son of the chief, approached him. Mackenzie at once stepped forward and held out his hand, whereupon the young man broke the string of a handsome sea-otter robe he wore and placed it on Mackenzie's shoulders.

The chief then conducted the travellers through a coppice for several hundred yards to a large house built on the ground, his own residence. Mats were at once spread before it, on which they were told to sit. In front of them the chief and his council sat on other mats, and behind the guests the men of the village ranged themselves as spectators. Soon a roasted salmon was placed before each of the visitors. They ate their fill of this dish, and were then regaled with several others, of which salmon oil was a principal ingredient. One of these was a cake made of the inner bark of the hemlock tree, pressed into shape and dried. When required for use it was soaked in water, teased apart, and liberally sprinkled with the

salmon oil. This is considered a great delicacy, and their principal host, the chief, ate of it with avidity.

The feast lasted for three hours, the natives looking on all the time with intense interest and curiosity. At its conclusion the voyageurs erected a shelter for the night. Before retiring, however, Mackenzie gave a blanket and other articles to the young man who had presented him with the fur robe, and bestowed gifts to others who had been attentive to him. Among the gifts to the old chief were a pair of scissors, which were at once applied to clipping the old fellow's long beard.

Mackenzie made a tour of the village, which he named Great Village, and his description of the houses is interesting, and shows that little change has been made in the architectural methods used by the coast Indians at that time and the present. Some were built on piles, others on the ground, of logs, and measured from a hundred and twenty feet long and about forty feet wide. At this place he observed more totem poles, carved and painted.

"Near the house of the chief," writes Mackenzie, "I observed several oblong squares of about twenty feet by eight. They were made of thick cedar boards, which were joined with so much neatness that I at first thought they were one piece. They were painted with hieroglyphics and figures of different animals, and with a degree of correctness that was not to be expected from such an uncultivated people. I could not learn the use of them, but they appeared to be calculated for occasional acts of devotion or sacrifice, which all these tribes perform at least twice in the year, at the spring and fall. I was confirmed in this opinion by a large building in the middle of the village, which I at first took for the half-finished frame of a house. The ground-plot of it was fifty feet by forty-five; each end is formed by four stout posts, fixed perpendicularly in the ground. The corner ones are plain, and support a beam of the whole length, having three intermediate props on each side, but of a larger

size, and eight or nine feet in height. The two centre posts at each end are two feet and a half in diameter, and carved into human figures, supporting two ridge-poles on their heads at twelve feet from the ground. The figures at the upper end of this square represent two persons with their hands on their knees, as if they supported the weight with pain and difficulty; the others opposite to them stand at their ease, with their hands resting on their hips. In the area of the building there were the remains of several fires. The posts, poles, and figures were painted red and black, but the sculpture of these people is superior to their painting."

After Mackenzie had retired to rest, "the chief paid me a visit," he records in his journal, "to insist upon my going to his bed companion and taking my place himself, but, notwithstanding his repeated entreaties, I resisted this offering of his hospitality."

The following morning, 19th, the chief again came to the explorer's lodging, complaining of a pain in his chest, and Mackenzie ministered to him with his cure-all, Turlington's Balsam, a few drops on a piece of sugar. It is apparent that the natives attributed wonderful powers to the white chief, for he was taken to see a sick man so worn by a foul ulcer on the back that he appeared not far from death. Mackenzie declined to undertake his cure, but could not withstand the temptation to administer a dose of his favourite remedy. Shortly afterwards the shamans, or medicine men, took the unfortunate patient in hand. They blew on him, pressed their extended fingers with all their strength on his abdomen, squirted water from their mouths into his face, kindled a fire against his back, and scarified the ulcer with a dull instrument. "The cruel pain of which operation the patient bore with incredible resolution. The scene afflicted me, and I left it," says Mackenzie.

When he returned to his own lodge he saw four great heaps of salmon, each containing three or four hundred

fish, which sixteen women were cleaning and preparing for future use. These fish are afterwards strung up on poles in their houses to dry.

Paying a visit to the chief at his own residence, Mackenzie was again presented with a roasted salmon, and the chief opened one of several wooden chests, out of which he took a garment of blue cloth decorated with brass buttons, and another of flowered cotton, believed to be of Spanish make. He was also showed copper, brass, and iron, which the natives manufacture into bracelets, earrings, collars, anklets, daggers, and other articles. The chief also told him that ten winters before he went in a big canoe with forty of his people a considerable distance towards the south ("the mid-day sun"), when he saw two vessels full of such men in appearance as Mackenzie. They were the first white people he had seen, and they had treated him kindly. Mackenzie thought that this might have been Captain Cook, but it might just as easily have been Meares or Dixon. The chief showed the canoe in which he had voyaged, and Mackenzie measured it. It was forty-five feet long, four feet wide, and three and a half feet deep, painted black and decorated with white figures representing fish. The gunwale, fore and aft, was inlaid with the teeth of the sea-otter. The latitude of Great Village, according to Mackenzie, is 52° 25′ 52″ N.

A canoe was provided for the travellers in which to continue their journey to the sea, now within measurable distance, and they were about to embark when it was discovered that an axe had been stolen from them. Mackenzie calmly sat down, his gun and pistols at hand ready for instant use, and demanded the immediate return of the missing article. His men took exception to this procedure, but their leader knew the advantage of firearms. He feared that if he permitted this fault to pass, the natives would regard his complaisance as evidence of timidity, and they might not only proceed to rob the

party of all their possessions but of their lives as well. The village immediately became a scene of uproar and confusion, but, impressed by Mackenzie's resolute air, the axe was restored, and at one o'clock in the afternoon the voyage down the Bella Coola was resumed, four of the villagers accompanying them. Something else that Mackenzie lost at Great Village was not returned, his dog, nor does he appear to have made any complaint about it, yet he remarks that the loss was " a circumstance of no small regret to me."

After travelling for an hour they landed at a small village where lived a person of some importance, who regaled them in much the same manner as had been done at Friendly and Great Villages. At another house lower down the river they were treated to a dish of berries of various kinds, and there they saw a woman with two pieces of copper in her lower lip, after the fashion described by Captain Cook and other navigators of the north-west coast.

Still farther down-stream, after passing a fall, they arrived at another village (named by Mackenzie Rascal's Village), consisting of six very large houses erected on piles rising twenty-five feet from the ground. From these houses Mackenzie saw the mouth of the river and its discharge into a narrow arm of the sea, Bentinck Arm. His goal, the Pacific Ocean, lay before him.

Mackenzie was not, however, the first white man to visit Rascal's Village, or to gaze out upon the wooded slopes that hemmed in the far-reaching arm of the great Pacific Ocean. Had he arrived there six weeks earlier he would have met in that out-of-the-way place the Englishman James Johnstone, master of the ship *Chatham*, under Lieutenant Broughton, the consort of the *Discovery*, in command of Captain George Vancouver, sent out from England to negotiate with the Spaniards for the transfer of Nootka to the British. This expedition, after leaving Nootka in the spring of 1793, sailed for the north, and



Bella Coola River Delta.



surveyed nearly the whole of the north-west coast. Arrived in the vicinity of Dean's Canal and Burke's Canal, the *Discovery* anchored in Restoration Bay, and boats were despatched under various officers to survey those waters; and Johnstone, who was in charge of one boat, landed at the village on June 3rd where Mackenzie arrived on July 19th. How joyous that meeting would have been had it taken place! No very vivid imagination is required to conjure up the scene that would have ensued had the fur-trader and the navigator, both explorers, and the jolly Jack Tars and the volatile French-Canadians, forgathered on that distant shore.

It being half-past six in the evening when Mackenzie arrived, he decided to remain there for the night. Taking possession of one of the unoccupied houses, they supped on the remains left over from the previous meal, the natives declining to supply them with any fish. Rising early on Saturday morning, 20th, another, but by no means new, difficulty confronted them. Two of the four men who had accompanied them from Great Village peremptorily refused to proceed any farther when he proposed that they should go with them in the canoe down the arm. The other two, however, consented to remain with them, and, having obtained a larger canoe from the natives of the village, they crossed the river-bar, and were at last upon the bosom of the Pacific. How the details of the welcome scene must have appealed to Mackenzie, to whom, as a son of the spindrift, the salty air, the fresh smell of the seaweed left exposed by the receding tide, were all so familiar! Almost could he believe he was again at his beloved Stornoway. The odours reminded him of it, as did also the fog that hid the timbered walls of the deep-sea channels that opened to his vision as he advanced farther down the arm. Sea-otters, porpoises, gulls, ducks, and other living creatures sported in and above the waters.

Paddling down North Bentinck Arm, they passed the

entrance of the South Arm. At two o'clock in the afternoon an adverse wind and a heavy swell, together with a leaky canoe, obliged them to seek shelter, and they found it in a small cove, in Green Bay, named Porcupine Cove by Mackenzie, because one of the party, the son of the chief of Great Village, had killed, cooked, and eaten —with the help of two voyageurs—a porcupine the night before. Opposite to where they landed lay the entrance to South Bentinck Arm, and in the mouth of it an island, named Kinkilst Island, sometimes erroneously spoken of as King Island; but it must be distinguished from the larger King Island, which lies to the west of Labouchere Channel near by.

During the evening the two natives became restive; they wished to return to their friends, and one of them made his escape. His companion and Mr Mackay went after him and brought him back, but as Mackenzie did not now need his services, he was given a small supply of provisions, a pair of moccasins, and a silk handkerchief, and bidden rejoin his people, and to tell them the travellers would be with them again in three days. The young man then left him, and his companion went with him.

The supply of provision now left to the party was so small as to excite the lively concern of the leader. The stock consisted of twenty pounds of pemmican, fifteen of rice, and six of flour, a scanty quantity for "ten half-starved men, in a leaky vessel and on a barbarous coast."

There, at Green Bay, they camped and passed the night, and it is not difficult to imagine Mackenzie's feeling as he lay down to rest upon the beach, striving to compose himself to sleep while there raced through his mind the glorious thought that, despite so many hindrances and hardships, he had at last actually attained his desire: he was camped on the shores of the western sea, so much sought after, with the sound of the lapping of the waves and the murmur of the surf ringing in his ears. Whether he slept much or little he does not say, but in any event

he was astir at an early hour next morning. He was not content to rest upon his laurels. He determined to proceed still farther seaward.

Leaving Porcupine Cove, now known as Green Bay, at six o'clock, and passing Menzies Point on the west of South Bentinck Arm, they steered west-south-west for seven miles and opened Burke Channel, whose width Mackenzie estimated at two and a half miles, and down which he could see for ten or twelve miles.

He did not know how far the open sea was distant, and being uncertain whether "we were in a bay or among inlets and channels of islands, I confined my search to a proper place for taking an observation." In other words, he was looking for a place where, in lieu of the open sea, he could have an uninterrupted view over water for a number of miles to properly check the behaviour of his artificial horizon, a southerly aspect being preferable for that purpose. Turning Masatchie Point, facing down Burke Channel, he followed Labouchere Channel to where he thought he saw an island, just as Captain Vancouver when he explored Burrard Inlet took Stanley Park, part of the city of Vancouver, B.C., for an island. What Mackenzie really saw is a peninsula bearing a strong resemblance to an island from a distance: "And from thence directly across to the land on the left (where I had an altitude)." The land he made when he thus crossed Labouchere Channel was Point Edward, but which in a footnote he erroneously named Menzies Point. "From this position," he continues, "a channel, of which the island appeared to make a cheek, bears north by east." This is Dean Channel.

Near Point Edward (on King Island) they fell in with three canoes containing fifteen men, one of whom with an insolent air informed Mackenzie that "a large canoe" had lately been in that bay, that one of the white people in the vessel, and whom he called "Macubah" (Vancouver), had fired on him and his friends, and that "Benzins"

(Menzies) had struck him on the back with the flat part of his sword. Mackenzie comments: "I do not doubt but he well deserved the treatment which he described." From the fellow's conduct and appearance Mackenzie was anxious to get rid of him, but when he prepared to part from the natives they turned their canoes about, and persuading their guide, the son of the chief of Great Village, to enter one of their canoes, they bore the explorer company, much to their chagrin.

This unruly savage was probably the individual encountered by Vancouver's party on June 2nd near the head of Dean Channel, and who, to avoid them, poled his canoe up a small creek, at whose mouth Vancouver left some trinkets. The story of his being fired upon was a myth; he was doubtless so terrified that he imagined it.

Rounding Point Edward and coasting along King's Island down Dean Channel, they met a canoe with two boys in it, who were despatched by the troublesome natives to summon the people of that part of the coast to join them. The obnoxious individual who had so much to say in complaint of his treatment by "Macubah" and "Benzins" forced his way into Mackenzie's canoe, "and pointed out a narrow channel on the opposite shore that led to his village, and requested us to steer towards it, which I accordingly ordered," states Mackenzie. The unbidden and unwelcome passenger was very importunate, demanding to know the use of everything he saw, and insisting upon examining every article they had. Continuing their way, "at some distance from the land," states the discoverer, "a channel opened to us, at southwest by west, and, pointing that way, he made me understand that 'Macubah' came there with his large canoe."

The two "channels" here mentioned by Mackenzie are Cascade Inlet and Elcho Harbour, the entrance to each of which could be readily seen as the canoe skirted along the shore of King's Island. Cascade Inlet is the opening first fallen in with on going down Dean Channel



Mackenzie Rock.

View of the rock from the south, showing the canoe-landing.

towards the open sea, the narrower one, Elcho Harbour, being the more westerly of the two. The Bella Bella Indians had a village on Elcho Harbour at that period, but Vancouver makes no mention of having seen any native settlement anywhere on Cascade, Inlet, which he explored from outlet to head, but refers to a village south of the point on the west side of the outlet of that inlet. Mackenzie was approaching Elcho Harbour.

"When we were in mid-channel," continues Mackenzie, "I perceived some sheds or the remains of old buildings on the shore; and as from that circumstance I thought it probable that some Europeans might have been there, I directed my steersman to make for that spot."

He landed to examine the buildings, and "found the ruins of a village in a situation calculated for defence. The place itself was overgrown with weeds, and in the centre of the houses was a temple of the same form and construction as that which I described at the large village. We were soon followed by ten canoes, each of which contained from three to six men. They informed us that we were expected at the village, where we should see many of them. From their general deportment I was very apprehensive that some hostile design was meditated against us, and for the first time I acknowledged my apprehensions to my people. I accordingly desired them to be very much upon their guard, and to be prepared if any violence was offered to defend themselves to the last.

"We no sooner landed than we took possession of a rock, where there was not space for more than twice our number, and which admitted of our defending ourselves with advantage in case we should be attacked. The people in the three first canoes were the most troublesome, but, after doing their utmost to irritate us, they went away."

The conduct of these natives must indeed have been flagrantly bad to have driven Mackenzie to the length of

instructing his men to prepare for the worst, and to sell their lives as dearly as possible. There is little doubt but that if the natives, who numbered about fifty men, had attacked them, the Canadians would have fought like brave men, and inflicted severe punishment before being overcome by sheer weight of numbers. When danger threatened only, still in the offing, so to say, they might quail; but when it had to be faced they did not shrink from it, be it what it may. This incident shows how thoroughly Mackenzie kept his temper in subjection. The provocation was great. His fingers must have itched to administer sound chastisement to the rascally wretch who made so many complaints about "Macubah" and made himself so objectionable. But he curbed his anger, knowing that he must exercise restraint if he wished to extricate himself and those with him from a perilous situation. How well he succeeded is apparent to all who read.

Holding fast to his rock, Mackenzie learned with indignation that his irritating visitors had taken with them several small articles; but as he did not wish to deliberately provoke a contest, he permitted the thieves to go unreprimanded. The rest of the natives, finding that their pressing invitation to visit their village had no effect, left them about sunset. Not yet, however, were they to be left quite alone. Another canoe with "seven stout well-looking men" in it arrived, and offered to trade "a very fine sea-otter skin and a goat skin that was beautifully white," but demanded more than the fur-trader felt disposed to give. Mackenzie naïvely remarks, "they actually refused a yard and a half of common broad cloth, with some other articles, for the (sea-otter) skin, which proves the unreflecting improvidence of our European traders." These natives also told of "Macubah" having been there. They said he had left his ship behind a point of land (Restoration Bay) in the channel to the south-west (Burke's Channel), from whence he had visited their village in boats. Presently

the natives paddled away, and the adventurers lighted a fire for warmth; "and as for supper," comments Mackenzie—and one can almost visualise the wry smile with which he wrote the words—"there was but little of that, for our whole daily allowance did not amount to what was sufficient for a single meal." That little partaken of, they lay down to rest, the men keeping watch by turns in pairs.

On the morning of the next day, 22nd, soon after eight o'clock, Mackenzie took several observations to find his position. Soon two canoes came with several men, and among them their guide, who had gone with them the previous evening. He urged Mackenzie to leave at once, declaring that the natives had hostile intentions, and would attack them if they persisted in remaining. He represented them as being of very malignant character, and as numerous as mosquitoes. These representations were not without their effect upon the voyageurs, who added their entreaties for a speedy departure; but Mackenzie was obstinate. He declared that he would not stir until he had accomplished his object and ascertained their precise position. He calmly went about his work of taking observations; nor did the arrival of two more canoes from down Dean Channel, apparently the forerunners of others from the same direction, who had come in response to the messages carried to them by the two boys the previous afternoon, suffice to make him swerve from his determination. The guide, however, urged instant flight, and was so agitated that he foamed at the mouth, and the Canadians repeated their entreaties, demanding whether he intended to remain there to be sacrificed. Mackenzie was not free from apprehension himself, but took care not to show to his men that he felt any uneasiness. He told them, however, as a placebo that they might place their goods in the canoe, and thus be ready for departure. The two canoes from Dean Channel came to the shore and landed five men and their

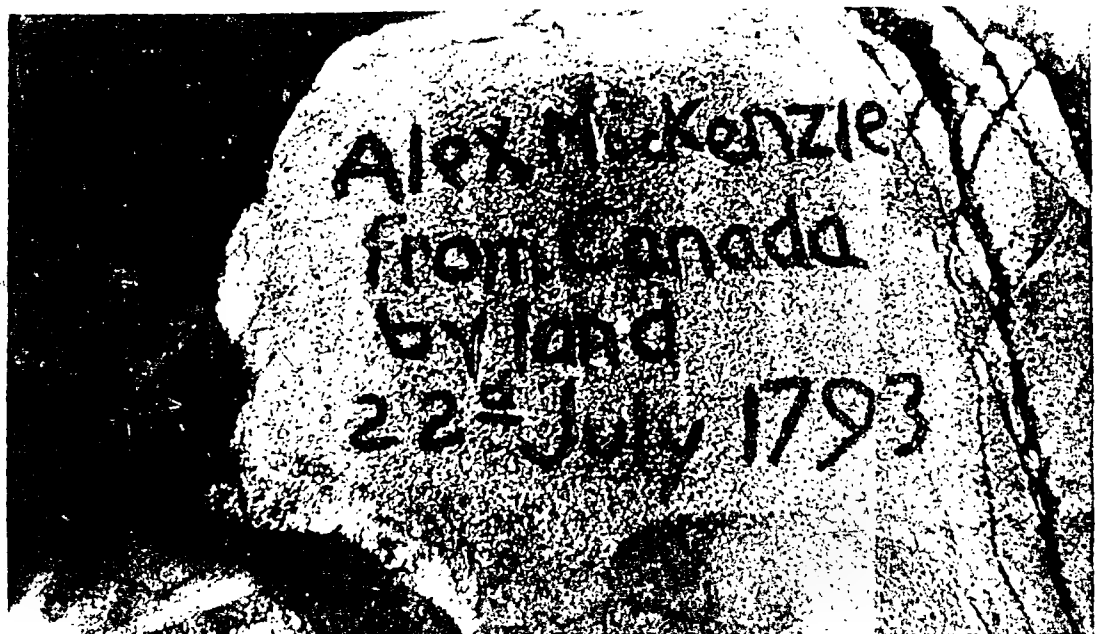
families, who examined with astonishment the various instruments Mackenzie was using in taking observations. He took several, and fixed his position at 52° 20′ 48″ N. latitude and 128° 2′ W. longitude; and he adds: "I had now determined my situation, which is the most fortunate circumstance of my long, painful, and perilous journey, as a few cloudy days would have prevented me from ascertaining the final longitude of it." Cloudy weather had almost had the effect he feared. While encamped at Green Bay only two days before, he had been disappointed in his hope of deciding his position. "I had flattered myself," he states, "with the hope of getting a distance of the moon and stars; but the cloudy weather continually disappointed me, and I began to fear that I should fail in this important object." Having found and recorded his position, he knew that he had completed his self-imposed mission. In a footnote added to his journal at the time of its publication, he says: "This I found to be the cheek of Vancouver's Cascade Canal," a statement that misled those who subsequently sought to discover the spot where he stood when he made his calculations.

One cannot but admire the aplomb of this determined man during the trying hours of his sojourn in the vicinity of the offensive coast Indians. His men in a fever of unrest, fearful lest they should be attacked and exterminated, on the one hand; the young man from Great Village, presumably on tenterhooks lest his association with the strangers might draw down upon his people the displeasure of these truculent neighbours, on the other, urged him to immediate and precipitate retreat. They enjoined him in effect to—

> "Stand not upon the order of your going,
> But go at once!"

Mackenzie refused to be hurried, or stampeded into leaving the place, before he was fully prepared to do so.





Mackenzie's Inscription.

He had set his mind upon making certain observations while conditions were propitious, and nothing they might say would move him from his purpose. While the guide and the voyageurs fretted and fumed and fidgeted uneasily, with cool deliberation he completed his appointed task. When it was finished, and not until then, he gave the order to go, to return as they had come. This was no act of bravado, no mere exhibition of dogged obstinacy. Engrossed with the one overwhelming desire, to accurately decide his whereabouts, he concentrated all his energies upon the fulfilment of that object, the final crowning of his great exploit.

On Whale Island in the Arctic, Mackenzie had erected in 1789 a wooden post, suitably inscribed, as a silent witness of his visit. Now, on the Pacific, he again left a memorial, not on perishable wood but on solid rock. He says: "I now mixed up some vermilion in melted grease, and inscribed, in large characters, on the south-east face of the rock on which we slept last night, this brief memorial: 'Alexander Mackenzie, from Canada, by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three.'" A brief memorial in very truth, but of what significance! The perishable record of an imperishable achievement, the record of the first transcontinental journey across the North American continent north of Mexico, the immense distance by land from Atlantic to Pacific had been spanned for the first time by civilised man! Had Mackenzie known, what he could not possibly then learn, that Captain Vancouver was on that very day in the neighbourhood of Maskelyne Point, surveying the channel leading to Observatory Inlet and Portland Canal, he might have made an attempt to join him. That would have been indeed a momentous event. But he did not know, and the homeward journey was commenced.

The precise situation of Mackenzie's Rock was for long unknown. Despite repeated efforts made to locate that

historic spot, those who sought it were invariably baffled. Two causes were mainly responsible for the difficulty in pegging the exact site. One was the footnote added to his journal when he prepared it for publication eight years after he made the journey, the note quoted above: "This I found to be the cheek of Vancouver's Cascade Canal." The other was the error in fixing his geographical position, due to inaccurate instruments rather than carelessness in "shooting the sun" or star-gazing through his telescope. He was not alone in making these errors. Other explorers and navigators made just as palpable mistakes, not excepting Vancouver himself, who, for example, made an error of over twenty miles in fixing the geographic position of Monterey on the coast of California.

John Dunn, the author of the 'History of Oregon Territory,' published in London in 1844, and who was stationed at Fort M'Loughlin, now known as Bella Bella, on Millbank Sound, in 1836 visited Mackenzie's Rock, and in the work just mentioned he states that he saw Mackenzie's inscription, which even at that date was only partly legible. Dunn says (page 267): "And in case any vessel should run to this place to trade, he (Mackenzie) made a mark on a large rock, which was partly decipherable when we were there." Dunn did not, however, give any clue as to its location.

Captain R. P. Bishop, of Victoria, British Columbia, solved the difficulty that had puzzled so many who had sought to unravel it. This gentleman, formerly an officer of His Majesty's Navy, on the staff of H.M.S. *Shearwater*, and since his retirement from active service connected with the Survey Branch of the Department of Lands of that province, in which he resides, in 1923 devoted his energies to the clearing up of the mystery, and this with the consent and support of the Surveyor-General of British Columbia.

Commenting on Mackenzie's method of ascertaining his

position, Captain Bishop points out the longitude was obtained by comparing local time with Greenwich time. The former was easy to obtain, but before the days of the telegraph and wireless the determination of Greenwich time was always a difficult problem, unless the errors in one's chronometer could be corrected at some place where the longitude had been determined beforehand. Mackenzie obtained his Greenwich time by observing the eclipse of Jupiter's moons, to observe which he had carried his telescope across the continent. "As the lunar method was considered to be more accurate than the eclipse of a satellite, even when the latter was observed under the most favourable conditions, and as Mackenzie's determination under difficult circumstances and by the less accurate method was incomplete and possibly obtained by a telescope of insufficient power, it may be considered that the error of forty minutes of arc was not excessive."

Captain Bishop decided that the explorer was generally about a mile in error, and from this premise he decided that the rock where he took refuge, and on which he painted the historic and momentous legend, would be found within a mile and a half north or south of the mean of the latitudes given by the explorer.

Careful examination of Mackenzie's route followed step by step by Captain Bishop, and since corroborated and confirmed by Mr J. P. Forde, resident engineer of the Public Works Department, Victoria, British Columbia, shows that Mackenzie went down Dean Channel to a point on the King's Island coast west of the mouth of Elcho Harbour on the opposite and mainland shore. "The traverse is upwards of three miles north-west," states Mackenzie, which brought him to a spot on the north-west shore of Dean Channel, a short distance north-east of Elcho Harbour. "We landed," writes the explorer, "and found the ruins of a village, in a situation calculated for defence, &c."

"A little to the north of Elcho Harbour," states

Captain Bishop, "a bright green patch of alder catches the eye at once. Examination shows that this was once the site of a village 'in a situation calculated for defence.' There is a commanding view, the nature of the country behind offers excellent protection, while the canoe landings at each end afford a means of escape to the north or south by way of Dean Channel, or towards the west by way of Elcho Harbour. On the southern canoe landing are a couple of petroglyphs, carved on boulders a little below high-water mark. The presence of the petroglyphs tends to confirm that the place is an old village site. . . .

"To the south of the village site is an isolated rock which answers Mackenzie's description." Its walls, nearly vertical elsewhere, are overhanging on the inland side, and in other places logs and stones have been built up to increase its defences. A sufficient portion of it is flat and smooth, presenting a good painting surface.

Mr Harlan I. Smith, of Ottawa, archæologist of the Geological Survey of Canada, who visited the place, thus describes it: "On the eastern side of the entrance of Elcho Harbour is a little rock promontory. Here I found the refuse of an ancient village pretty well covering the entire promontory, and, without making use of suitable tools, discovered that this refuse reached the depth of at least 18 inches. I was told by the Bellacoola Indians that this promontory had been fortified with a high strong wall of logs. The natural steepness of its shores would largely protect it without such a wall. The Bellacoola Indians told me that there had been about four houses within the enclosure, and that its entrance leading from the land was closed at night. They also said that on the land were a few other houses.

"In a small bay between this rocky promontory and the eastern shore of Elcho Harbour is a beach where the people could have pulled up their canoes, and on this beach are two rocks bearing petroglyphs. These rocks are washed by the high tide. The Indians say there are

burial caves in the cliff back from the promontory. This promontory is a noticeable feature to the observant tourist, who, travelling at ease by passenger steamer, may be passing on Dean Channel to or from Ocean Falls, because since the Indians have lived here no heavy timber has grown on the old village site, and so it is grown up with nettles and other vegetation, which shows at a great distance as a much lighter green than that of the evergreen forest.

"The Indians say that this fortified point and its accompanying mainland habitations were the home of Bella Bella Indians, a people entirely different in language from the Bellacoolas. It is my present belief that it was the people of this Bella Bella settlement that are referred to by Mackenzie, and that his party dreaded to meet at the time when they started on their homeward journey. . . .

"A short distance to the west along the north side of Dean Channel are two places where the Indians have painted red upon the cliffs rising from the sea, but no one has yet been able to discover the painting which Mackenzie states he put upon the rocks. This painting may have weathered away, or, as the Indians say, it may have been destroyed by forest fire." Or it may have been deliberately removed by the Indians themselves!

Mackenzie did not, however, consider his Rock impregnable, although he describes both it and the old village site as "well suited for defence." He recognised that his position was vulnerable in the one direction whence he most feared attack, from the natives from Elcho Harbour, and "as I thought that they were too near the village, I consented to leave this place, and accordingly proceeded north-east three miles, when we landed on a point in a small cove where we should not be readily seen, and could not be attacked except in our front."

The two canoes that had come down Dean Channel followed them, and soon afterwards departing, the young

man from Great Village embarked with them. This did not suit Mackenzie, who did not want any harm to come to him, nor did he desire that the young man should return to his father, the chief, before him, nor did he wish to go back to Great Village without the young man in his company. He therefore forcibly compelled the youth to return to the shore, and kept him under his own supervision lest he should obey the instructions shouted to him by the occupants of the canoes to "go over the hill, and that they would take him on board at the other side of it."

This strategical movement is easily traced. Three miles north-east of the Rock a promontory, Cape Mackay, juts out from the same side of Dean Channel, and forms the south-west boundary of the mouth of Cascade Inlet. There lies the "small cove," and across the hill, constituting the "point" the "young chief" was urged by the natives who followed Mackenzie to his new camping ground to make his escape, promising to pick him up on the other side of it, Cascade Inlet. That was Mackenzie's last camp on those waters.

The findings of Captain Bishop have been accepted as final, and his conclusions have been concurred in by the British Columbia Historical Association, the Government of British Columbia Land Department, and the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. The site determined corresponds in every detail with the description given by the explorer: a southerly exposure for three miles, a flat surface of rock, near an old deserted village, close to an inlet on which was an Indian village, a cove and promontory three miles north-easterly from it. No other spot in the vicinity fulfils these requirements.

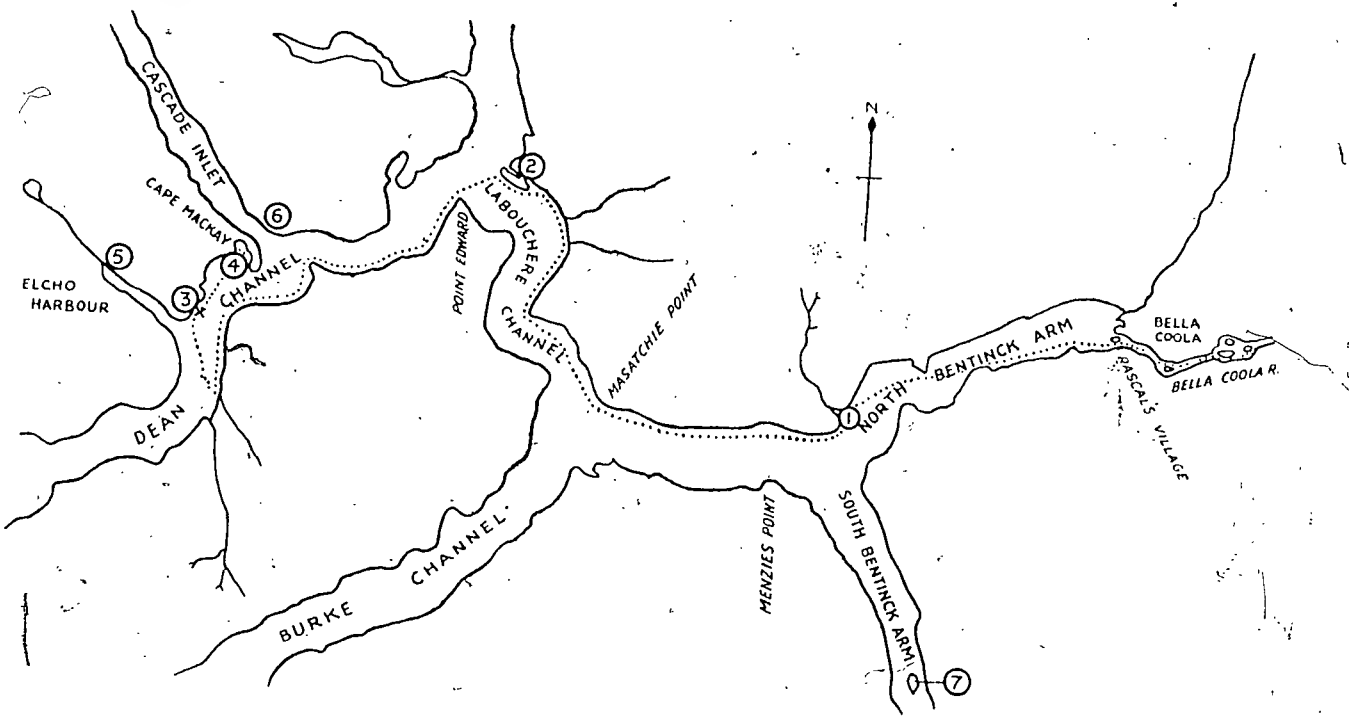
Any faults in the mileage of his courses as given in Mackenzie's book, and other apparent discrepancies, may well be accounted for. The leaky condition of the canoe, demanding constant watchfulness, and especially in crossing open water; the natural exasperation felt on account

of the conduct of the obnoxious native; the possibility of attack and the danger of starvation, are factors that may be accepted as likely to cause an omission, or even an exaggeration, of some circumstance. The lapse of years between the time of making the journey and the final preparing of the manuscript for the press is another possible factor in the production of errors that must not be overlooked. But, after all, none of the shortcomings in this connection are of any great moment, and the excellent painstaking work done by Captain Bishop in settling a question that has for nearly a century been a vexed one, is in the highest degree commendable.

There must be taken into consideration the words with which Mackenzie closes his book. He evidently realised that his observations and courses were not absolutely correct, for he is careful to give this warning at the end of his narrative: "It is to be observed that the *Courses* throughout the Journals are taken by *Compass*, and that the *Variation* must be considered."

Mackenzie had neither map nor chart with him upon which to identify his position. Indeed, Vancouver only surveyed that part of the coast a few weeks before Mackenzie's arrival there, and no chart was in existence showing these waterways. It was not until years later that Vancouver's map was available, and by that time the precise meaning of some of his own notes may have grown stale and vague in Mackenzie's memory.

Mackenzie's Rock has, therefore, been definitely placed at last, and the Historic Sites and Monuments Board have embellished it with Mackenzie's inscription chiselled into the solid rock and filled with red cement, an imperishable record of one of the most important of the many momentous events that have had a far-reaching influence upon the destinies not only of Canada but of the British Empire. But for the achievements of Mackenzie, Fraser, and Thompson, it is a question whether Canada would have any outlet to the western sea to-day.



MACKENZIE'S EXPLORATIONS ON THE PACIFIC.

1. Porcupine Cove (Green Bay). 2. "The Island," really a peninsula. ×3. Mackenzie's Rock, and site of ancient native village.
4. The "small cove," Mackenzie's final camp, at Cape Mackay, where the natives urged the "young chief" to "go over the hill."
5. Bella Bella village, the home of the "troublesome fellow." 6. "The Cheek of Vancouver's Cascade Canal."
7. Kinkilst Island.
Mackenzie's route by canoe.....

The point on Elcho Harbour reached by Mackenzie is about fifteen miles up Dean Channel eastward from Cousins Inlet, where is the present busy town of Ocean Falls. The waters that Vancouver explored and upon which Mackenzie sailed in a canoe in 1793 now resound with the hoarse note of the steamship's siren, and the curious pleasure-seeker indolently gazes upon the scene from the promenade deck of comfortably appointed coasting vessels.

Mackenzie was struck with the difference in appearance of the Indians inhabiting the region west of the coast range of mountains, from that of the Carriers and Sekenais whom he found occupying the country from the Rocky Mountains to the headwaters of the Blackwater River. Of those who came from down Dean Canal in canoes, he says: "These Indians were of a different tribe from those which I had already seen, as our guide did not understand their language." Not only did they differ in language but in physical characteristics as well, short, squatty, thick-set in body, and small in legs, with a big, square, flat face, short neck set on heavy shoulders, powerful arms. The high cheek-bones and peculiar faces are distinctly Mongoloid in type, which, with certain philological resemblances, give colour to the belief that the coast region may originally have been peopled by immigrants from Asia. In dress, manners, and customs they differed very materially from the interior natives, and in no respect was, and is, this difference more noticeable than in their housing arrangements, the large community dwellings of the coast, described by Mackenzie as seen at Friendly Village and Great Village, being altogether different from the Keekwillie houses and lodges occupied by the interior tribal sub-divisions.

Environment had much to do with these differences, as had the milder but rainy climate of the coast as compared with the drier interior. What the horse was to the Indian of the plains, the canoe was to the coast

Indian. He rarely travelled on foot, trails were few, and such as these were, were used more by visitors to the coast from the interior than the contrary. The coast native moved from place to place by water, and generations of squatting, using the arms much and the legs but little, resulted in the production of the man as Mackenzie saw him. The interior Indians used canoes a great deal as well, but the more open country afforded better opportunities for hunting game; and as horses were altogether unknown in the valley of the Upper Fraser at that time, the hunting was perforce done on foot, and the interior native was therefore better developed proportionately than his fellow by the sea. Mackenzie observed all these salient differences, and never failed to inquire into the customs of the natives with whom he sojourned, even if only for a few hours.

Association with the maritime traders had not proved beneficial to the coast tribes, and their hostility to Mackenzie may be traced to those adverse influences as well as to their naturally quarrelsome nature. A timorous policy in dealing with them would have proved fatal. Mackenzie had the good sense to assume a bold front, and thus saved himself and his men from destruction.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RETURN TO FORT CHIPEWYAN.

AT ten o'clock in the evening of that memorable day of July 22nd, Mackenzie turned his back upon the scene of his great triumph and set his face homeward. Returning the same way they had gone, against an adverse tide, so eager were the men to put as great a space as possible between them and the unfriendly natives that they proceeded at a rapid rate, and at half-past four in the morning of the 23rd they arrived at their encampment of the night of the 21st, which they had named Porcupine Cove.

Continuing onward, they drew near the village at the mouth of the Bella Coola River. The water being shallow, the tide at ebb, they landed a mile below the village, and while the men secured the canoe, Mackenzie followed the guide towards the houses, out of one of which two natives emerged and ran towards him "with daggers in their hands and fury in their aspect."

"From their hostile appearance," says Mackenzie, "I could not doubt their purpose. I therefore stopped short, threw down my cloak, and put myself in a posture of defence, with my gun presented towards them, whereupon they promptly dropped their daggers."

Several other natives joined them, among them the man who had been so troublesome near Point Edward, and who again repeated the names of "Macubah and Benzins." His appearance at that village so incensed

the explorer that, he declares, "if he had come within my reach, I verily believe that I should have terminated his insolence for ever." One of the natives contrived to get behind Mackenzie, and grasped his arms from the rear; but although he quickly disengaged himself, he could not understand why the Indian had not plunged his dagger into his back.

"They certainly might have overpowered me," he admits; "and although I should probably have killed one or two of them, I must have fallen at last." Fortunately one of the Canadians appeared, and immediately the natives fled to the shelter of their houses.

Fully ten minutes elapsed, however, ere the remainder of the white men arrived, straggling one after the other, which circumstance led Mackenzie to observe that if the natives had killed him in the first instance, they could easily have successfully despatched the entire party, leaving none to tell the tale.

In the scuffle that had taken place, the hostiles decamped with Mackenzie's hat and cloak. He now determined to compel them to restore them, and, in addition, to disgorge the other articles they had stolen several days before out of the canoe, for most of the men they had encountered at sea in the three canoes near Point Edward were then in the village. Ordering his men to prime their guns afresh—they were muzzle-loading flintlocks in those days,—Mackenzie drew them up before the house in which the natives had taken refuge, and made signs for them to come out. The young man who had served as their guide responded, and explained that the men who had been in the canoes had told their friends in the village that not only had the white strangers treated them ill, but had actually killed four of their number. The explorer endeavoured to show the falsity of such an absurd story, and not only insisted upon the prompt restoration of everything stolen from him, but demanded, by way of penalty

or amends, a supply of fish. Both demands were complied with.

Mackenzie named the place Rascal's Village, and, after taking an observation which gave its latitude as 52° 23′ 43″, he prepared to embark in the canoe. Before departing, however, he asked for more fish, and for some poles to use in taking the canoe up the river. These wants were supplied with alacrity, and the explorer paid for them, and also recompensed them for the use of their canoe. This unexpected generosity brought about a reconciliation and a better understanding.

But the troubles of the explorer were not yet over. The young Indian from Great Village was so terror-stricken by the events of the last few days that he refused to remain with the party, and urged them to depart at once in his father's canoe, which had been left at Rascal's Village when they embarked on the sea. As if Mackenzie had not enough to contend with in placating the natives, his own men again became unruly, and threatened to take their own course on the return journey and cross the mountains on foot. This fractiousness arose out of the fact that the insolent native and four of his companions had gone up the river in a canoe loaded with boxes, creating the fear that they were proceeding to the next village to turn its inhabitants against the strangers. The voyageurs declared they would not embark in the canoe, and to emphasise their determination deliberately threw all their belongings except their blankets into the river, so that they might pass over the mountains lightened of superfluous encumbrances.

The conduct of these men appears to us as puerile in the extreme, but they should not be judged either hastily or harshly. For many weeks they had toiled unceasingly, generally in a state of discomfort, frequently wet-through, often half famished, always filled with alarm at the hostile demonstrations of the natives, their night's rest too often broken, eternally on the *qui vive*—can it be wondered

at, then, that their nerves were on edge, their tempers frazzled, and their naturally excitable natures ready to take fire at every fresh alarm? Mackenzie knew this, and instead of upbraiding them in harsh terms he reasoned with them, pointed out the folly and the danger of the course they contemplated, and in the end persuaded them to renew their trust in his leadership; but they flatly refused to take to the canoe again, and persisted in walking, the canoe being manned by Mackenzie, Mackay, two of the voyageurs who had not sworn, as had the other, not to embark, and one of the Indian hunters who was ill.

All along the river whenever they came to any houses they were accorded a welcome by the inhabitants, despite the fact that the insolent coast Indian and his associates visited all those people in advance. On the 24th they awoke to find that the young Indian from Great Village had gone off with their canoe, leaving them without any means of transport. Fortunately two of the people near whose houses they had passed the night provided a canoe, and took them up the river. Everywhere they were fed on salmon and berries, and shown every kindness, the voyageurs travelling on foot sharing in all these benefits. Some of the fish caught by these river Indians are described by Mackenzie, who did not consider them salmon. He says "the flesh is white, but neither rich nor well flavoured." They were those inferior varieties of salmon that none but Indians will eat, the dog salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*) and the humpback salmon (*O. gorbusca*).

On Thursday, 25th, they arrived at two unoccupied houses, beyond which the natives who had conveyed them in their canoe refused to go by water, but agreed to conduct them by land, there being a good trail to Great Village. Mackenzie and some of his people visited the vacant houses out of curiosity, and met with a hot and uncomfortable reception from a host of fleas, with which they swarmed, "and we were immediately in the same

condition," says Mackenzie jocularly, "for which we had no remedy but to take to the water."

The guides went forward too quickly for the sick Indian hunter, and instead of keeping their promise made their escape, much to the disappointment of the explorer, who had hoped they would give the old chief at Great Village a good report of them, and so offset any unfavourable story that his son might tell him. Despite his natural anxiety, Mackenzie did not fail to observe the immense size of the trees. "This road conducted us through the finest wood of cedar trees I had ever seen." Some of them measured twenty-four feet in girth, and alders were seven and a half feet in circumference, and rose to forty feet without a branch.

As they neared the village the men's arms were examined and put in order, and Mackenzie gave Mackay—whose gun had been dragged from the canoe by the branch of a tree as they ascended the river and lost—one of his pistols. As one of their recent guides had reported to him that the man to whom he had given some Turlington's Balsam was dead, Mackenzie feared it might be thought his end had been hastened by it. This, and the possibility of an ill report by the chief's son, might result in a hostile reception, and it was well to be prepared for the worst. Arriving at the village, however, they were received in a friendly enough spirit by the people, but the chief did not appear for some time. When he at length did so they found him to be inclined to be surly because of the anxiety he had felt respecting his son, who had, however, returned home safely. A few presents and payment of the guide for his services had a salutary effect, and the gift of ten roasted salmon from the chief closed the episode.

It was here that Mackenzie had lost his dog, but despite the statement that it had howled about the village ever since, a search for it proved barren of results.

Escorted to the last house in the village by the chief,

his son, and a number of people, the travellers resumed their journey on foot, with Mackay in the lead and Mackenzie himself bringing up the rear. On the way through a stately forest they fell in with the missing dog, reduced almost to a skeleton, and apparently afraid of them, yet continuing to follow. By dropping food so that he could find it, he gradually became accustomed to them again, and resumed his place among them.

On the 26th, at eight in the morning, they reached Friendly Village, and were received with marked kindness, the chief, Soocomlick, being especially attentive and generous in providing fish for their journey. There they remained three hours, and when they took their departure at eleven o'clock, every man of the village accompanied them along the trail for about a mile.

So generously had the Friendly villagers supplied them with salmon that each man carried about twenty pounds' weight of it, Mackenzie and Mackay alone having less so they would not have so much weight to carry. As an illustration of Mackenzie's care for the Indians in his party, it is worthy of mention that when they came to ford the river, the explorer carried the sick hunter across on his back.

Leaving the valley at one o'clock at noon, they began to climb the first mountain on the return trail. "The fatigue of ascending these precipices [1] I shall not attempt to describe," remarks Mackenzie, "and it was past five when we arrived at a spot where we could get water, and in such an extremity of weariness that it was with great pain any of us could crawl about to gather wood for the necessary purpose of making a fire. . . . Nor was it possible to be in this situation without contemplating the wonders of it. Such was the depth of the precipices below and the height of the mountains above, with the rude and wild magnificence of the scenery around,

[1] The height, ascertained by Lieutenant Palmer in 1863, was 3840 feet.

that I shall not attempt to describe such an astonishing and awful combination of objects, of which, indeed, no description can convey an adequate idea. Even at this place, which is only, as it were, the first step towards gaining the summit of the mountains, the climate was very sensibly changed. The air that fanned the village when we left at noon was mild and cheering; the grass was verdant, and the wild fruits ripe around it. But here the snow was not yet dissolved, the ground was still bound by the frost, the herbage had scarce begun to spring, and the crowberry bushes were just beginning to blossom."

On August 4th they reached the place, which they had left a month before, where they had left their canoe, which they found in good order, "nor was there the print of a man's foot near the spot." Pitching the tent and making a blazing fire, each man was given a "regale" of rum in celebration of their safe return to their canoe, "but," states the explorer, "we had been so long without tasting any spirituous liquor that we had lost all relish for it."

A party of Indians camped on the opposite side of the river made hostile demonstrations when they observed the strangers, but the interpreter gave them such explanation as served to pacify them, and to send a messenger to summon the natives who had been in that place on Mackenzie's former visit there, and who were at this time some distance up the river on an island. When they came they were rewarded for the care they had taken of the property of the expedition. Mackenzie was determined to create the best impression he could, and was careful to treat the natives fairly at all times.

On Monday, 5th, they began preparing for the return voyage up the great river. The journal says: "At nine this morning I sent five men in the canoe for the various articles we had left below, and they soon returned with them, and, except some bale goods which had got

wet, they were in good order, particularly the provisions, of which we were now in great need."

This item from the journal should set at rest for all time any question respecting the course taken by Mackenzie when he left the Fraser for Bella Coola. If they went up the Blackwater in their canoe, as has been generally asserted, after caching the pemmican, gunpowder, and bales of goods, they must necessarily have left the canoe up that stream. If, however, that were the case, why should Mackenzie send his canoe down that same Blackwater, which he himself states is a shallow stream, for the concealed goods, and put his men to all the labour of paddling or poling the laden vessel back up the same stream, since they would only have to take them down again in order to reach the Fraser, where lay their homeward way? Such a supposition is preposterous.

The truth is, that Mackenzie did not ascend the Blackwater in his canoe at all. There is actually not a shred of evidence to show that he took his canoe one paddle length up. On the contrary, there is much upon which to base the belief that he did not. To turn back to July 3rd. What did Mackenzie do? He was then at the mouth of the Blackwater, which stream he "found to be navigable only for small canoes." His large canoe, heavily laden, could not have ascended it. He says: "Before I left this place, to which I gave the name of West-Road River." And again: "At four in the afternoon we left this place, proceeding up the river"—the Fraser, not the Blackwater, which he distinctly says they left.

The place where they left the Fraser for the coast is several miles above the mouth of the Blackwater, and, by taking a trail leading to the west, they avoided all the obstacles presented in the valley of that stream. There are several such trails that must have been in existence at that time leading to the same part of the Pacific coast.

One of these starts from opposite Alexandria—Mackenzie's turning-back point—and, leaving the Fraser valley, traverses an elevated plateau. It then crosses the upper Chilcotin River and passes Puntze Lake. Beyond the lake there lies an undulating wooded plateau, and beyond it the southerly sources of the Bella Coola River. This trail was utilised in 1862 by a merchant and packer named Barron, who operated a pack train over it, taking in supplies from the coast to the Cariboo gold-fields. It was also used by miners going to and from the mines. Had Mackenzie followed that trail he would have found it less difficult and arduous than the one his guides conducted him over. It must have been known to the Fraser River Indians with whom he sojourned on June 22nd and 23rd, and it is quite possible they did not tell him of it because of their evident desire to induce him to leave their own part of the country. The easy way to get rid of him was to tell him of the other and more distant trail.

To continue. A number of natives arrived from both up and down the Fraser, each wearing a beaver robe, fifteen of which Mackenzie purchased for large knives. Although none of the things left in the shelter built for their reception near where the canoe had been housed during the journey to the coast had been molested in their absence, now that they were present to guard their property, several articles were stolen. Mackenzie called the natives together, and gravely told them that the sea where the salmon came from belonged to the white men, and that, as they could prevent the fish from entering the mouth of the river and thus deprive them of their main food-supply, and bring about the starvation of all their people, they would be wise to avert the white men's anger by returning the things that had been purloined. This appalling revelation of the white man's power created such a state of consternation among the Indians that messengers were sent in all directions to collect the missing articles, the most part of which were recovered.

On August 6th the canoe was loaded, and all embarked. Later in the day they landed at a house on Woodpecker Island, where they procured some salmon and four beaver-skins. Heavy rains filled the tributary streams and creeks, causing a perceptible rise in the main river, and increasing the current and the labour of the voyageurs.

On the 8th they passed the rapids in Fort George Cañon, and on the 13th, without untoward incident on the way, came "to the narrow gut between the mountains of rock, which was a passage of some risk." This is the place described as having been passed on June 18, and is on the north fork of the Fraser (M'Gregor River). "The state of the water was such," says Mackenzie, "that we got up without difficulty, and had more time to examine these extraordinary rocks than in our outward passage. They are as perpendicular as a wall, and give the idea of a succession of enormous Gothic churches."

They were on very short allowance of food; the weather turned very cold, and, to hearten as well as warm, on the 14th their leader gave the men the last of the supply of rum. That night they camped on the banks of James Creek (Bad River), and on the 15th arrived at their old camping-ground of June 13th. The water being low, they searched for the bag of ball they had lost when the canoe had collapsed, but without success. At two o'clock in the afternoon of the 16th they came to the portage leading to the first lake, and reached the high land "which separates the source of the Tacoutche Tesse, or Columba River, and Unjigah, or Peace River."

Not until then does Mackenzie give the great river a name. On his way down he had not known what river he was on, nor where it would take him; but when he prepared his journal for the press he had learned of Gray's discovery, and of Lieutenant Broughton's ascent of the Columbia as far as the site of the present town of Vancouver, in the State of Washington, and he jumped to the conclusion that the river he had discovered, and

which he had designated "Great River," must be the Columbia. That belief prevailed until Simon Fraser in 1808 made the discovery that the mouth of the Tacoutche Tesse was several hundred miles farther north than that of the Columbia, and was therefore a separate stream altogether.

It was characteristic of the man that at the time, in the midst of anxieties respecting the health of his men and their sustenance, as well as his own condition, he should have thought of planting the salmon in the Peace River system. He writes: "If I could have spared the time, and had been able to exert myself, for I was now afflicted with a swelling in my ancles" (fateful forerunner of the illness that cut short an active and useful life!) "so that I could not even walk, but with great pain and difficulty, it was my intention to have taken some salmon alive, and colonised them in the Peace River, although it is very doubtful whether that fish would live in waters that have not a communication with the sea."

So bad was Mackenzie's condition that he was compelled to submit to being carried over an inundated meadow at the portage that took them to the Parsnip. At half-past seven in the morning of the 17th they began to glide with the current of that river, and on the 18th the explorer comments: "We were seven days in going up that part of the river which we came down to-day; and it now swarmed, as it were, with beavers and wild fowl," which doubtless afforded them some relief from their short commons.

How light their hearts, how buoyant their spirits, as they rapidly descended the Parsnip! In a short time they would be among their own people, back with their old companions, once more to take up their old tasks in a country they knew, among natives of whose tongue, habits, and disposition they had intimate knowledge.

On the 19th they passed the Forks, where the Finlay and the Parsnip unite to form the Peace, and on the 20th

they were once again at Rocky Mountain Portage. Sending Mackay and the Indians ahead to hunt for game, Mackenzie superintended the preparations for making the long twelve-mile portage. At sunset the hunters returned laden with buffalo meat, and a hearty meal wound up the day. The portage was completed on the evening of the 21st, and on the 22nd they were again afloat, and safely ran the rapids that had given them so much trouble on the former journey. Again the hunters were sent ahead to provide food, and again they were successful; and when at noon the canoe with the explorer and his voyageurs arrived where Mackay and the Indians were awaiting them, it was to find they had killed two elk, and had a huge joint of venison already roasted ready for them.

That afternoon they killed another elk while *en route*. "To give some notion of our appetites," says Mackenzie, "I shall state the elk, or at least the carcase of it, which we brought away, to have weighed two hundred and fifty pounds; and as we had taken a very hearty meal at one o'clock, it might naturally be supposed that we should not be very voracious at supper. Nevertheless, a kettle full of the elk flesh was boiled and eaten, and that vessel replenished and put on the fire. All that remained, with the bones, &c., was placed, after the Indian fashion, round the fire to roast, and at ten next morning the whole was consumed by ten persons and a large dog, who was allowed his share of the banquet. This is no exaggeration; nor did any inconvenience result from what may be considered as an inordinate indulgence."

Now they were approaching the place whence they had embarked in the spring, and their eagerness to be "home" once more impelled them to be on their way before daylight on the 23rd. Now they were in a land of abundance, where game was so plentiful that all fear of want vanished. With satiety came fastidiousness, and when in the course of the day they shot a bear and a buffalo, they left them where they fell, because "they were not sufficiently fat

to satisfy our fastidious appetites." That night when they landed they prepared themselves for arrival at Forks Fort the following day: such a clipping of beards and hair, mending and patching of clothing, perhaps a little done in the way of laundry work!

Yet near as was Forks Fort, only a few hours' travel distant, they fell in with some Indians who were astonished to see them, the first white people they had ever seen. Eagerly the voyageurs gazed ahead as the afternoon of the 24th wore on, looking for the desired fort. In and out of the water flashed the gleaming paddles, faster and faster flew the canoe, louder and cheerily their voices united in their chansons, each man's heart beating high. Never had men done what they had accomplished. They had been to the far ends of the earth, and were returned in safety. What tales they would have to tell to their friends at the fort, and, later on, by the firesides of their relatives in distant Quebec. Ah, this was something like a home-coming!

"At length," says the journal in the plain unadorned phraseology of the great explorer, "as we rounded a point, and came in view of the Fort, we threw out a flag, and accompanied it with a general discharge of our firearms; while the men were in such spirits, and made such an active use of their paddles, that we arrived before the two men we left here in the spring could recover from their senses to answer us. Thus we landed at four in the afternoon at the place which we left on the ninth of May.

"Here my voyages of discovery terminate. Their toils and dangers, their solicitudes and sufferings, have not been exaggerated in my description. On the contrary, in many instances language has failed me in the attempt to describe them. I received, however, the reward of my labours, for they were crowned with success."

In that last pithy sentence, pregnant with exultation, is concentrated all the praise that a thousand pens could

write, or a thousand voices sing. The reward of his labours lay in the fact that in each voyage he had succeeded in accomplishing the object with which he had set out; "for they were crowned with success."

Happy he who can apply that crowning glory to his work, the knowledge of success. What mattered the mutterings of envious associates in business or the sarcasms of "Le Premier"! His reward, his chief recompense, did not rest on the whim or caprice of another, but wholly in his own proud consciousness of a task well done.

Mackenzie did not tarry at Forks Fort. In September he was back at Fort Chipewyan, enjoying the companionship of his cousin Roderick, after an absence of eleven months.

Some years ago—in 1909, to be precise—one of those rare mortals endowed with an understanding mind and a reverence for places almost hallowed by association with the achievements of great men, and who had descended the Mackenzie as far as the delta, and ascended the Peace to Smoky River, visited Forks Fort—or what then remained of it. The visit is described with facile pen in these terms:—

"From that far-off day in spring when we first touched the Clearwater we have been following in the historic footprints of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. We now take a day off, with the object of locating Mackenzie's last camp on the Peace, which he reached in 1792, and from which, in the spring of 1793, he started west across the map seeking an unknown route to the Pacific Ocean. We find the remains of that camp. It is in the corner of a potato field . . . only the foundations of the walls are left and the crumbling bricks of two old chimneys. . . . There is no more historic spot than that on which we stand this September day, and as yet it is all unmarked of commemorative stone or recording tablet. . . . I stoop and pluck from where it nods behind the old chimney

a wild larkspur, and as I half mechanically count its forty-two seed-pods, I try hard to throw back my thoughts to the year 1792—one hundred and sixteen years. It is a far call! Canada is tardy in her recognition of her early builders of Empire. Our cousins to the south would appear to be more appreciative.[1] In song and story and by a memorial World's Fair the people of the United States have honoured the discoveries of Lewis and Clark, but Mackenzie crossed the continent a full dozen years in advance of these explorers.

"Our mind feels back across the centuries to little-known Montreal, where, amid the bales of peltries and the trading trinkets of the Fur Company, a hidden voice is speaking and a young man listens. That man is Alexander Mackenzie, a self-taught Scot, a Canadian bourgeois. In the noisy mid-day clatter of the fort he hears the voice, in the waking hours of the dawn, and 'when evening shuts the deed off, calls the glory from the grey.' He cannot get away from that haunting challenge; he would not if he could. There are interminable changes rung on the everlasting whisper, but its burden is ever the same—

"'Something lost behind the Ranges,
Lost and waiting for you, Go!'

No more might it satisfy him to out-do his competitors and carry back to Grande Portage canoes overflowing

[1] In further illustration of the greater appreciation of their explorers shown by the people of the United States the following news item, culled from the Vancouver (B.C.) 'Daily Province' of December 13th, 1925, is quoted in full: "Astoria, Ore., Dec. 12.—Plans for the erection of a 125-foot monument to Captain Robert Gray, discoverer of the Columbia River, the explorers Lewis and Clark, and John Jacob Astor, founder of Astoria, were announced here by Ralph Budd, President of the Great Northern Railway. The monument, which will be in the form of a column based on a large pedestal, will be 12 feet in diameter, and will be crowned by an observation platform covered by a stone canopy, and it is estimated will cost in the neighbourhood of $75,000 or $100,000." This monument was unveiled on 22nd July 1926.

with furs. It was of a Western Sea that he had greatly dreamed among the bear-skins and beavers of Montreal, and to that ocean which split its waves 'somewhere' far beyond the snow crests of the Rockies he would go. . . . Mackenzie heard the beat of the surf upon the rocks, and came out from among the pines to the silver Pacific sparkling in the sun. It was a sweet day in summer's prime, and as the gulls cried overhead and the sun mixed scent of seaweed with balsam breath from inshore, we can imagine but not divine the feelings of that brave man who had thrown himself face downward on the sand, and from whose presence the awed companions stole silently away. We remember the words of another builder of Empire :—

> "'Anybody might have found it,
> But God's whisper came to me.'"

A few months ago others endowed with the same reverential spirit gathered at the site of the old Forks Fort, and sought for some tangible evidence of its former existence. Overgrown with weeds, a little stone cairn, the remains of a fireplace and chimney, alone remained to indicate the spot, so nearly has all trace of the memorable starting-point of the great discoverer's dash for the Western Sea disappeared from the eyes of man.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM CHIPEWYAN TO MONTREAL AND SCOTLAND. THE LAST EXPLORATION.

DURING the winter of 1793-94 Mackenzie remained at Fort Chipewyan, recuperating from the ill-effects of his arduous journey and the intense strain he had been subjected to from the day he left Forks Fort until his return to that same place on August 24th. He was still a very young man, just thirty years of age. In that short term of less than a decade, beginning with the taking of his first venture to the wilds of Detroit until his return to the comparative peace and quiet of the orderly régime at Fort Chipewyan, there had been crowded experiences such as rarely fall to the lot of one man within the full allotted span of the life, and in that time he had borne upon his shoulders great responsibilities that had left their indelible impress upon him in body and in mind.

Happy and contented with what he had accomplished, he now relinquished the rôle of explorer and resumed that of the fur-trader, spending part at least of his leisure hours in arranging and writing his journal, the record of his travels. He was not content, however, in other respects. Roderick Mackenzie had been sent to another post, and to him his cousin wrote from Chipewyan on January 13th, 1794: "I wish we could contrive matters so that we could both go to the Portage. The Premier having arrived from England, we may expect him at the Grande Portage, where it will be right that all inter-

ested should meet him. I am fully bent upon going down, for I think it unpardonable for anybody to remain in this country who can leave it. What a pretty situation I am in this winter, starving and alone, without the power of doing myself or anybody else any good! The boy at Lăc la Loche, or even my own servant, is equal to the performance of my winter occupation, and the profits, I am afraid, will be so small during the war [1] that it will not be worth any man's while to remain in it."

Alexander Mackenzie did not find the writing of his journal all that he had hoped. The mental strain endured during the summer of 1793 had left its mark. He found it difficult to concentrate his mind upon his writing. Doubtless he often wished Roderick were there with him to do most of the clerical work, for he had some literary ability, and Alexander had this in mind when he proposed that his cousin should revise and correct the manuscript.

Writing again to Roderick, the explorer referred to this work:—

"FORT CHIPEWYAN, *5th March* 1794.

"DEAR RODERICK,—It is now the season I promised to write to you, and would wish I could fulfil another promise I made you last Fall and this Winter. I need not tell you I mean 'my Journal.' But be assured it is as great a disappointment to me as to yourself, for I wished that you should peruse it at your leisure before any other person, as I expected you would examine the calculations, and correct the diction with that freedom which one friend might expect from another.

"Last Fall I was to begin copying it, but the greatest part of my time was engaged in vain speculation. I took such a habit of thinking so long on a subject that I sometimes walked backward and forward, musing, for hours, at the end of which I could not tell what it was about.

"Did I sit down and write, I was sure that the very things I ought not to have been thinking of would occur to me instead

[1] Between England and the French Republic.

of what I had to do. This one calling me to the garret, another to the cellar, and others to the shop, kept me so busy doing nothing that all I could do till the time I wrote you was to look over the men's accounts. In short, my mind was never at ease, nor could I bend it to my wishes.

"Though I am not superstitious, my mind caused me much annoyance. I could scarcely close my eyes without finding myself in company with the dead. I had visions of late which almost convince me that I have lost a near relation or a friend.

"It was the latter end of January when I began my work, thinking then that I had sufficient time, though the reverse is the case, and I will be satisfied, and so must you, if I can finish the copy for your perusal in the Spring. It is a work, I find, that requires much more time than I was aware of, for it is not at this moment a quarter finished."

This candid confession of his mental condition testifies more than anything else could do the depth of affectionate trust and confidence Mackenzie reposed in his kinsman. Casting aside all pretence, he avows without reserve that which few men would care to admit—a temporary loss of mental power. It is pathetic to read such a letter. Sick at heart, disappointed with himself, almost afraid of what his unhealthy visions might portend, he felt he must unburden himself to some one, and to whom better than his chosen friend and relative, Roderick?

True to his word, with the opening up of the rivers and lakes by the relaxation of the iron grip of winter, which had held them in subjection for many long dreary months, Mackenzie turned his back upon Fort Chipewyan, the *pays d'en haut*, the cradle, so to speak, of his great achievements, and went down to Grande Portage to attend the annual meeting. From his letters it is apparent he had no liking for the isolation incident to the life in the district over which he ruled. Perhaps when he left the fort he had caused to be built on the lake of the hills, he may have said farewell to it, but whether he did or not,

he never saw it again. He never returned to it, or to any part of the western country.

The first fruits of Mackenzie's exploration of the "Grand River," as the Mackenzie was sometimes called in those days, independent of the discoverer himself, was the building of a trading post eighty miles below the outlet of Great Slave Lake, by Duncan Livingston, by the order of the North-West Company. Under his management the post flourished for the space of three years. He and three Canadians under him and an Indian interpreter were killed, however, in 1799, by the Esquimaux while on a voyage to the Arctic Ocean. A year or two later another party of traders under the leadership of John Clark suffered attack by the same race, and narrowly escaped with their lives. These circumstances indicate that the fears of the Esquimaux so volubly expressed to Mackenzie by the Loocheux in 1789 were not without foundation.

In 1798, John Thompson, a Nor'-Wester, established Fort de la Rivière Rouge, or Grand Marais, at the entrance of the Little Red River into the Peace River, the dimensions of the establishment being 24 feet by 26 feet. Two years later the same trader built a post on the Mackenzie River "in full view of the Rocky Mountains," and called it Rocky Mountain Fort. It was abandoned in 1805. Sir Alexander called it Old Rocky Mountain House.

With the advancing years, Simon M'Tavish, the dominant note in the affairs of the North-West Company, became more domineering and more offensively sarcastic, more tyrannical, than ever. Among these who gathered at the great conference at Grande Portage, it was felt that the best interests of the traders stationed at the north and western posts, the so-called wintering partners, were in jeopardy. They turned to Alexander Mackenzie to safeguard them. Envious they might feel of what he had done, but they were not slow to recognise the ability of the young man who had forced himself to

the front, and to be willing to turn it to their own advantage.

It fell to his lot to take an active part in the proceedings at Grande Portage. The discontent with M'Tavish increased, and in 1795 a desire to cast off the intolerable yoke of Le Premier, the domination of Montreal, became very evident. Several of the partners left the company and associated themselves with the firm of Forsyth, Richardson, & Co., an independent Montreal firm that had been very active in the fur trade, chiefly about Lake Superior, and opponents of Simon M'Tavish. Self-interest restrained many others from following the example set by the seceding partners, and among them was Mackenzie himself. Reluctantly he agreed to remain a further period of three years with the North-West Company, although his sympathies were altogether with the malcontents.

In 1794, after the meeting of the wintering partners at the Grande Portage, Mackenzie went to Montreal in the autumn, and on his way paid a visit to Lieut.-Colonel Simcoe,[1] the first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada,[2] at Navy Hall, Niagara. Navy Hall was a log building

[1] 'The Makers of Canada,' vol. vii. pp. 188, 189.

[2] John Graves Simcoe, son of Captain John Simcoe and his wife Katherine Stamford, was born at Cotterstock, Northumberland, on February 25th, 1752. He entered the army, and saw service in North America. Returning to England after the surrender of Yorkton, he was promoted to the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. In 1872 he married Elizabeth Posthuma, only daughter of Colonel Thomas Gwillin of Old Court, Herefordshire. He was elected M.P. for the borough of St Mawes, Cornwall, and after the passing of the Canada Act was appointed first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada (Ontario), whither he proceeded in 1791. Governor Simcoe was beloved by the Iroquois, who named him "Deyotenhokarawen," meaning "the open door." At the close of his term of office he returned to England in 1796. He was sent to Santo Domingo in 1787 to pacify the rebellious blacks. Promoted to Lieut.-General in 1800-01, he was Commandant at Plymouth, and was later appointed Commander-in-Chief in India. While preparing to proceed to his new appointment he died at Exeter on October 26th, 1806.

erected during the War of American Independence by order of General Haldimand for the accommodation of naval officers serving on Lake Ontario. Some necessary alterations and improvements were made in it, and it remained Simcoe's official residence during his term of office. Mackenzie found in the Governor a sympathetic and interested listener as he recounted the story of his explorations and discoveries. To him Mackenzie outlined the advantages that would follow the establishing of trading posts on the Pacific coast, and alluded to the possibility of diverting the trade of the northern posts to the Western Sea. He also pointed out the advantage and desirability of an amalgamation of rival trade interests, instancing the East India Company as one of these. In short, he placed before Lieut.-Governor Simcoe a synopsis of the plan he subsequently urged upon Lord Hobart, as will be set forth at greater length farther on.

From Montreal, Mackenzie went to England, returning to Canada in the summer of 1795. He was then an agent or director of the Company, and one of its most powerful and influential members. On October 25th, 1797, he wrote to Roderick Mackenzie informing him "of the formation of a concern against the North-West Company by Messrs Forsyth, Richardson, & Co., and others." He must have known of its existence long before he wrote that letter, and Roderick on his part must have learned of the opposition through the ordinary channels almost as soon as it developed.

The organisation of the new concern proceeded rapidly and vigorously. It became known by a variety of names —the Little Company, the New North-West Company, the Little Society,—but soon, as if by general consent, by the algebraical letters X. Y., the explanation given for the selection of those letters being that they followed, and as the bales of goods for the North-West Company were marked N.W., so those of the new partnership were marked X.Y. Still another title was bestowed upon it

in the Athabasca district, where the rebels were dubbed "Potties," a corruption of the words "Les Petits," indicating the members of La Petite Compagnie, the Little Company.

James Mackenzie, brother of Roderick, was in charge of Fort Chipewyan in 1799-1800, and kept a regular journal, as all traders were supposed to do. Under date of May 23rd, 1800, he writes: "This morning about 11 o'clock the Potties arrived, debarked, and encamped on Little Island, near the Fort. Perrone having boasted of having come here only by spite to this company, and of having traded 40 skins in the Bustane Island previous to his arrival, Mr Finlay wrote him a letter enquiring into the truth of this report," &c. This entry would show that Alexander Mackenzie did not intend to leave the pickings of the Athabasca trade entirely to his former associates. His thoughts would naturally revert to his old posts when he laid his plans for waging war against the North-West Company. The same diarist, under date of May 25th, 1800, states that "about 12 o'clock last night, Mr Stuart and Mr Wentzel went off with three men and a few pieces for the Peace River. The former is to build a post for the Beaver Indians between Grand Marais and Lafleur's Fort, and the latter is to work for Brousseault at Grand Marais." The post that John Stuart established on this occasion was probably Horseshoe Fort, which lies between Forks Fort above Smoky River and Finlay's New Establishment.

In 1797 the X. Y. Company erected warehouses and other buildings at Grande Portage, little more than half a mile distant from the quarters of the North-Westers, a small stream, Pigeon River, that there empties into the bay, separating them. Subsequently, when the older Company removed their headquarters to the mouth of the Kaministiquia and named the place Fort William, after Honourable William M'Gillivray, a prominent partner, the X. Y. Company followed them there. They

became at once worthy rivals and opponents, not only of the North-Westers but of the older Hudson's Bay Company as well, both organisations feeling the effect of the new factor in the fur trade. From their base at Grande Portage they invaded and took possession of the Red River of the north, the Assiniboine and Swan Rivers, and of the country to the south, soon extending their operations as far west as Mackenzie's old district, the Athabasca region. The same tactics that had obtained at an earlier period in the history of the trade, unfair competition and the lavish use of alcoholic liquors—and that were attended by disastrous consequences on the former occasion,—were again adopted, and with signally unhappy results.

The feeling between Simon M'Tavish and Alexander Mackenzie increased with the passage of time. They cordially disliked one another, and the mutual antipathy reached its culmination at the annual meeting of the North-Westers in the spring of 1799. On that occasion Mackenzie bluntly warned his partners of his intentions to sever his connection with the Company. The wintering partners, those who best knew his worth and understood the spirit of the man, begged him not to desert them, entreated him to remain with them, but to all their prayers he turned a deaf ear. He had decided upon his course of action, and was not to be diverted from it any more than he was deterred from pursuing his journey to the Pacific by the murmurings and discontent of his companions on that great expedition. He had set his mind upon leaving the old Company, and he carried out his intention that same year.

That November saw him again in England, and he soon succeeded in finding a publisher for his book, 'Voyages from Montreal on the River St Lawrence, through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans, in the years 1789 and 1793,' which was published in 1801. Although he had clearly intended at one time

that his cousin Roderick should revise the manuscript, there is nothing to show that it was ever done. Perhaps it is more interesting because of its lack of literary polish. The plain unadorned recital of the two journeys has a greater appeal than the choicest diction could ensure. It came before the English people at a time when such books were rare, for travellers in distant fields were few in those days. The work brought the explorer conspicuously to the front. He was lionised and petted and fêted, and King George III. rewarded him with knighthood.

Perhaps some influence other than the recognition of Mackenzie's discoveries led to the creation of the new knight. The King's fourth son, Edward, Duke of Kent (Note E), afterwards the father of her late Majesty Queen Victoria, had been stationed in Canada—*i.e.*, Quebec and Nova Scotia—for several years, beginning with 1792, and within that period had formed the acquaintance of Alexander Mackenzie, and taken him into his favour and as a travelling companion. After leaving Canada the Duke of Kent maintained a correspondence with the fur-trader, and when Mackenzie went to London he was again taken in hand by the Duke, who once more made him his companion in travelling about Great Britain. For the royal son to suggest to his royal sire the propriety of conferring knighthood upon his friend, who was a famous explorer to boot, was nothing more than what might be naturally expected.

Before returning to Canada after receiving the honour of knighthood, Sir Alexander journeyed to Ayr to see his sisters, who were visiting relatives there. During his brief sojourn in that town a grand ball was given in his honour, the function being largely attended by the gentry of the town and district.

Mackenzie's return to Montreal in 1802 was almost in the nature of a triumphal entry. Appreciated and honoured by the king and his son, the Duke of Kent, lauded by the English people as a great traveller and discoverer,

the author of a history of the fur trade in Canada, he was received with open arms by the people of the great city on the St Lawrence. His old friends, the members of the X. Y. Company, placed him at the head of that concern, which now often was given another name, that of " Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Company."

The struggle between the redoubtable M'Tavish and Mackenzie now assumed titanic proportions. Each leader put forth his best efforts to achieve supremacy. Competition that had been keen rose to heights unparalleled in the annals of the trade. Methods that would scarce bear the light of day were resorted to. Traders and their subordinates were encouraged to adopt any means to gain the upper hand in trading with the Indians, who were shamelessly and shamefully plied with unstinted liquor. Quarrels, fights, bloodshed became as frequent as in the old days before the amalgamation of the free-traders, the French adventurers on the Saskatchewan. M'Tavish reorganised the North-West Company, extended its activities, rented the " King's posts " on the Lower St Lawrence, and established posts on Hudson's Bay under the very nose of the Hudson's Bay Company. Mackenzie sent traders to the Peace River, and sought by every possible means to counteract the plans of his skilful rival.

When the contest was at its very height, suddenly came peace. Simon M'Tavish died in 1804. The rupture that had begun in 1796, and extended to 1804, was healed by the death of the disturbing element. Proposals for an amalgamation of interests were made, and the two concerns became merged under the old name of the North-West Company, an agreement being entered into by all the partners of each concern. The agreement was signed by Alexander Mackenzie, John Richardson, John Forsyth, and John Ogilvie of the X. Y. Company in person, the other members being represented by power of attorney. For the old North-West Company the

actual signers were John Gregory, William M'Gillivray, William Hallowell, and Roderick M'Kenzie, the other partners' signatures being affixed by authority of power of attorney, as in the case of the other organisation. It will be noted that Roderick Mackenzie was one of the signatories for the North-West Company. Upon the retirement from that Company of Alexander Mackenzie in 1799, Roderick was made partner in his stead, the latter's acceptance causing a coolness between the cousins which lasted until after the amalgamation.

As indicative of the renewed energy thrown into the business of the reorganised Company, trading posts were founded at several points down the Mackenzie River, and in this may be seen the hand of Sir Alexander, who never forgot for one moment what he had learned of the resources of the scene of his first voyage of discovery. In 1804 a fort was built sixty miles north of the mouth of Great Bear River, and another still farther north, one hundred miles beyond the Ramparts. The first-mentioned was removed in 1810 to the mouth of Great Bear River, and named Fort Norman; subsequently it was moved forty miles up-stream, and after several other removals it was finally fixed at its present site. The second post established in 1804 and named Fort Good Hope was later moved, and ultimately came to rest on the east side of the Mackenzie, two miles above the outlet of Hare Indian River. About the same time, perhaps a year later, Fort Simpson was established at the confluence of the Liard with the Mackenzie. In 1807, Willard Ferdinand Wentzel, a Norwegian, who had entered the service of the North-West Company in 1797, was in charge of it.

Making Montreal his place of residence, Mackenzie took an active interest in public affairs and in the social life of the city and the colony of Lower Canada. The site of his residence in Montreal, near the top of Simpson Street, is marked by a tablet recording the fact let into the wall of a house. He sat in the Legislative Assembly

as representative of Huntingdon county, an English-speaking constituency of Lower Canada (Quebec), but he did not take kindly to political life, and soon retired from his parliamentary career.[1]

In 1795 the explorer became a member of the famous historic Beaver Club, which was founded ten years earlier, an exclusive organisation to which none were admitted as members who had not passed a winter in the *pays d'en haut*. Unanimous vote was essential to election. Established with a view to the providing of a social medium in which the asperities of rival trading interests might be removed, and the several commercial ventures welded into one harmonious whole, its original membership included many names that are part and parcel of the history of the west. Four of the charter members had made their initial journey to the Indian country before 1760—Chaboillez, Blondeau, Campeau, and Des Rivières. Others who had wintered beyond the great lakes in the early days of the Montreal participation in the fur trade in that distant field were the three Frobishers, the two M'Gills, Alexander Henry, Gabriel Coté, Louis Ainse, James Finlay, George M'Beath, Matthew Lessey, Peter Pond, John M'Namara, David M'Crae, and Jean Jobert.

Although a member for many years, it was not until after 1804 that Mackenzie took any very active interest in the affairs of the club. In 1807 it was reorganised, and regular meetings were held once a fortnight from December to April each winter until 1817, when it ceased to exist. Several subsequent attempts to resuscitate it proved abortive.

One of the rules of the club provided that the regular club toasts should consist of five—The Mother of All Saints, The King, The Fur Trade, Voyageurs' Wives and Children, and Absent Members. After the regulation toasts had been honoured, members were permitted to

[1] His tenure of office began August 6th, 1804, and ended April 27th, 1808.

drink as they pleased. Another rule exacted regular attendance, very much as the modern Rotary Clubs and kindred social organisations do to-day. Illness or absence from Montreal were the only legitimate excuses. Each member was required to wear the club medal, with its sky-blue ribbon, on club days, or pay a fine of one dollar.

The Beaver Club's meeting-place prior to 1807 is not recorded, but in that year meetings were held at the City Tavern, and afterwards at an establishment known by various names—Montreal Hotel, Dillon's Coffee House, Dillon's Hotel, and Dillon's Tavern—which stood on the south-west corner of St James Street and the Place d'Armes. It was pulled down in 1858, and the building of the Liverpool, London, and Globe Insurance Company erected on the site. After 1807 the meetings took place first at Palmer's Tavern, next at Tessyman's. In 1817 the Mansion House Hotel was used for the purpose. Colonel Landmann, in his interesting work 'Adventures and Recollections,' gives a lurid word-picture of a dinner at which he was present, given by Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Hon. William M'Gillivray, then living together in bachelor quarters, to the North-Westers, members of the Beaver Club. Landmann was the invited guest of Mackenzie and M'Gillivray.

"In those days," says Landmann, "we dined at four o'clock, and after taking a satisfactory quantity of wine, perhaps a bottle each, the married men retired, leaving about a dozen to drink their health.

"We now began in right earnest and true highland style, and by four o'clock in the morning the whole of us had arrived at such a degree of perfection that we could all give the war-whoop as well as Mackenzie and M'Gillivray. We all could sing admirably, we could all drink like fishes, and we all thought we could dance on the table without disturbing a single decanter, glass, or plate, by which it was profusely covered; but on making the experiment we discovered that it was a complete

delusion, and ultimately we broke all the plates, glasses, bottles, &c., and the table also; and worse than all, the heads and hands of the party received many severe contusions, cuts, and scratches. . . . I was afterwards informed that one hundred and twenty bottles of wine had been consumed at our convivial meeting, but I should think a good deal had been spilt and wasted."

But this uproarious dissipation did not prevent Mackenzie from arousing two of his guests at nine o'clock to journey down the St Lawrence to Quebec. He and M'Gillivray went with them to Port-au-Tremble, and then returned. These occasional lapses from sobriety do not indicate that Mackenzie was intemperate habitually, but he was no "spoil-sport."

At the meeting of the club in September 1808, among the guests was John Jacob Astor, afterwards the promoter and head of the Pacific Fur Company, the founders of Astoria, a trading post at the mouth of the Columbia River, in 1811. Astor's headquarters were in New York, but he also had an office and warehouse in Montreal, at the corner of Vaudreuil Lane and St Thérèse Street, and had business dealings with Alexander Mackenzie, the X. Y., and the North-West Company. He made a proposal to the latter Company to associate with him in forming an establishment on the Columbia, and, upon its rejection, he enlisted in his service a number of experienced North-Westers, and sent them out to the Pacific coast to put into effect the plans he had formed. Probably at the dinner in 1808 he took advantage of the golden moment to do a little quiet lobbying among the North-West partners.

CHAPTER X.

THE RETURN TO SCOTLAND.

In 1808 Mackenzie left Canada to reside permanently in Scotland, a step he had long contemplated and desired. Three years later another Scotsman, Lord Selkirk, undertook to plant a Scottish colony on the banks of the Red River. The publication of Mackenzie's book of 'Voyages' had awakened much interest in Great Britain; among those whom it influenced was Thomas, Earl of Selkirk, who soon formulated his colonisation scheme. Sir Alexander Mackenzie strongly opposed it, and threw every impediment he could devise in the way of its accomplishment. One of his relatives, an aunt, had married a Mr Reid, who was then collector of customs at the port of Stornaway, where the first company of settlers for the proposed colony embarked on the ship *Edward and Anne*. Reid, instigated it is said by Sir Alexander, with all the zeal of an officious and prejudiced functionary, did his utmost to thwart the carrying out of the project. Means were adopted to create discontent among the emigrants, and some of them were actually induced to withdraw on the eve of departure, and an effort was made to claim some of the colonists as deserters from the King's service. The real motive for Mackenzie's opposition is to be found in the fact that he had acquired an interest in the stock of the Hudson's Bay Company, in which concern Lord Selkirk had been obliged to invest heavily in order to obtain sufficient control to enable him to carry out

his proposals. Mackenzie doubtless held the opinion, so long prevalent among the fur-traders, that the colonisation of a fur country with settlers would interfere considerably with the profitable prosecution of the fur industry. The question was merely one of profits or no profits, and Mackenzie was more concerned in the success of the fur trade than in that of the Selkirk settlement on Red River.

During the first few years after his return to his native land Mackenzie renewed his intimacy with the Duke of Kent, and was at times his travelling companion. He desired, however, to settle down. He had means, he was in the prime of life, and an estate in the Highlands appealed to him. There he might marry and live, happy and contented, the life of a respected laird with a young family growing up about him. Soon the attractive dream became a fact.

In 1812 Sir Alexander married Geddes Mackenzie, a woman of remarkable beauty. Although of the same clan, they were not related in any way by ties of blood, as some writers have erroneously stated. His lineage has been briefly referred to in a previous chapter. The lady's family were descendants of the second Earl of Seaforth through his grandson, George Mackenzie (II.) of Gruinard, who was twice married. By his first wife, Margaret, daughter of Alexander Mackenzie of Ballone, he had twenty-three children, and by his second wife, Elizabeth, natural daughter of President Forbes of Culloden, he had ten more—a total of thirty-three offspring. His eleventh child was Captain John Mackenzie of "Castle Leod," who married Geddes, daughter of his uncle Simon Mackenzie, and who bought Avoch, an estate in the Black Isle, Ross-shire, on Moray Firth, with money left by his wife's brother, Admiral George "Geddes" Mackenzie. Of this union there were eleven children, the eldest of whom, George of Avoch, a merchant of Tower Hill, London, married Margaret, daughter of Rev. William

Mackenzie, minister of Glenmuick. Twin daughters were the issue of this marriage—Geddes Mackenzie, who became the wife of Sir Alexander in 1812, and Margaret Elizabeth Mackenzie.

It has been variously stated by previous writers that his wife brought Avoch to Sir Alexander, while others assert no less positively that he purchased the estate. Careful inquiry has proved the latter contention to be correct. In reply to inquiry made by me of the present owner of Avoch, his legal advisers, at his request, write me as follows :—

" George Mackenzie, by his Disposition and Settlement, dated 13th November 1809, disponed his lands and estates to the Trustees named therein for certain specified purposes. On the death of George Mackenzie his two daughters made up title to the estates, as 'heirs-portioners' of their father, and it is specifically stated that this procedure was adopted 'to save expense.' The daughters then conveyed the estates to the Trustees of their father, who was entitled to them to carry out the Trust purposes. George Mackenzie had given his Trustees power, if necessity arose, to sell the estates, and they sold them in 1812 to Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 'now or late of John Street, American Square, London.'" This letter serves the double purpose of setting at rest all doubt as to the manner in which Sir Alexander acquired his estate of Avoch, and of giving the address he then occupied. John Street, American Square, runs from Crutched Friars to Minories, and the fact that that part of the city was then, partly at least, residential is interesting. John Street is in close proximity to Tower Hill, where Geddes Mackenzie's father resided.

By her marriage to Sir Alexander, Geddes Mackenzie became the mistress of the house and property that had doubtless been occupied from time to time by her father, and where she probably had spent some of her younger days. Her twin sister, Margaret Elizabeth, married

Thomas Mackenzie (III.) of Applecross, member of Parliament for Ross, and a Writer to the Signet. Thomas Mackenzie sold Applecross in 1857 to the Duke of Leeds.

Sir Alexander and his wife did not spend all their days at Avoch. Every year during the season they went up to London and participated in the gay life of the capital. Their first town house was in Jermyn Street. Subsequently they moved to Clarges Street, a property that was held by the family for many years after Sir Alexander's death. There is on my desk at this moment a letter written to me in April 1926 by an old lady, a niece of Sir Alexander, in which she states: "When I was a girl entering my 'teens' I remember a juvenile Highland ball at the Mackenzies' London house in Clarges Street, but then that would be some twenty-five years at least after Sir Alexander's death." This indicates that the Clarges Street house was still held by the Mackenzies as late as 1845.

Reference has been made to Sir Alexander's intimacy with the Duke of Kent. How close was the friendship between them is shown by the following letter from His Royal Highness to the explorer. The original of the letter is in the Royal archives at Windsor Castle:—

"KENSINGTON PALACE, *1st Novr.* 1819.

"MY DEAR SIR ALEXANDER,—I have gratefully to acknowledge your favour of the 26th ulto. received on the 30th, covering the copy of your letter to our mutual worthy friend Mr Charles Forbes, for which fresh mark of your friendship and attachment I beg to express my warmest thanks.

"The Committee of my friends met on the 25th, and, as I understand from General Wetherall, evinced every disposition to do all in their power to make me comfortable, but adjourned until the 6th before they came to any determined resolution, expecting that by *that* day they might be joined by Messrs Wood and Hume, when I hope everything will be concluded satisfactory to all parties, and some steps taken to impower

two or three active members of the Committee to undertake the business of regulating for the sale of Castle Hill by way of Tontine, or raffle, upon the propriety of which I am quite delighted to find that you so perfectly concur with me.

"I ran over in the course of last week to Devonshire to look out for a house that might suit the Duchess to pass the next four months in, near the Sea, to enjoy the benefit of the mild air of that part of our Coast and of the tepid sea Baths, and I trust we shall be able to manage our remove thither in the course of this month. In the meanwhile I know it will give you pleasure to learn that she is getting over the effects of weaning her Infant,[1] as well as I could possibly expect, and that our little child does not appear to thrive the less for the change.

"Sincerely hoping that Lady M'Kenzie will get over her accouchement with every possible comfort, and with every sentiment of the warmest friendship and regard for yourself.—I remain ever,

"My dear Sir Alexander,

"Yours most faithfully,

"EDWARD.[2]

"Sir Alexander Mackenzie."

When not enjoying the gaieties of a London season the Mackenzies resided at Avoch, finding abundant occupation and pleasure in caring for the people of the village and vicinity. As a landed proprietor and country gentleman, Sir Alexander was pre-eminently enterprising and very popular. He took a keen interest in agriculture in the district, and carried out many improvements, including the building of a sea-wall to protect the road between Avoch and Fortrose from the inroads of the sea. Laying down an oyster-bed in the Bay of Munlochy, which was successfully operated for many years, was another of his

[1] This "infant" afterwards became Queen Victoria.

[2] This letter was presented by Mrs Heald, Sir Alexander's granddaughter, to His Majesty King George V. through the medium of the late Princess Christian.

numerous benefactions. The people of the villages of Avoch and Rosehaugh are simple deep-sea fishermen, and it is not difficult to visualise Sir Alexander visiting them in their cottages, watching the women weave the great nets that their men-folk cast into the deep waters far out in the North Sea. Or he might be seen taking note of the progress made by the men in making the heavy sea-going fishing smacks which they use, and which, being their own handiwork, they could trust to for stability and staunchness. Supported in all these beneficent acts by Lady Mackenzie, his life at Avoch was passed pleasantly and profitably.

In addition to sharing in her husband's projects for the betterment of local conditions, Lady Mackenzie found her domestic duties needed much of her attention and care. Their first child, a girl, was born on May 2nd, 1816, and was named Margaret Geddes. Two years later, on St Valentine's Day, the second child, a boy, named Alexander George, was added to the family circle; and late in 1819 a second son was born, and was named George.

Mackenzie had retired from the active side of the fur trade with a comfortable competence, and was thus enabled to indulge in the luxury of playing the part of the local "laird" or squire. He was not, however, unmindful of his former associates who had shared with him the dangers and hardships of life in the Indian country. Writing to his cousin Roderick from Avoch on January 14th, 1819, he said :—

"I hope that before now you have discovered the annual income of your estate to exceed your expectations. I should not be sorry to hear of your having disposed of it advantageously; perhaps you might think of investing it in your native land. Follow the example of our old friend, Mr M'Gillivray, who, I find, has bought an estate in Argylshire for £20,000.

"I trust Mrs M'Kenzie [1] and your young family are continuing in their usual good health. Marguerite [2] must be now a stout lady, and my namesake [3] about finishing his education for college. Had you sent him to this country it might have been as well.

"What do you think of sending Roderick-Charles here when he is fit? We have two good academies in this country, at Thain and at Fortrose. I shall have a little fellow, if God spare him, this day eleven months old, that would accompany him.

"Our little girl is very thriving. Her mother has not recovered her usual health since her last confinement, and I have at last been overtaken with the consequences of my sufferings in the North-West.

"I think it is of the same nature as Mr M'Gillivray's complaint, but it has not yet arrived at a severe crisis. I have, in obedience of orders, become a water drinker and a milksop. I have not tasted wine, spirituous or malt liquor for several months, which I think has been of service to me.

"The symptoms of the disorder are very disagreeable and most uncomfortable. The exercise of walking, particularly up hill, brings on a headache, stupor, or dead pain, which at once pervades the whole frame, attended with listlessness and apathy which I cannot well describe. Exercise in a carriage, if not violent, has a beneficial effect. The great doctor Hamilton of Edinburgh calls it a shake of the constitution.

"Although the usual time of arrivals from Canada is past, I have not yet lost the hope of hearing from your brothers Henry [4] and James.[5] They are, I fear, retaliating

[1] Roderick's wife was a daughter of Charles Jean Chaboillez, an old Nor'-Wester. Her sisters married Simon M'Tavish (Le Premier) and Joseph Bouchette, Surveyor-General of Lower Canada.

[2] Married Robert Lester Morrough, prothonotary of Montreal district.

[3] Afterwards Lieut.-Colonel Alexander Mackenzie. He resided at Terrebonne, where he died in 1862.

[4] Henry Mackenzie, brother of Roderick and cousin of Alexander, was possessed of marked administrative abilities. He was secretary of the North-West Company for many years, and managed the estates of Simon M'Tavish and Joseph Frobisher. He married the daughter of Rev. John Bethune in 1815, and died 1832.

[5] James Mackenzie, another brother, joined the North-West Company in 1794, had charge of Fort Chipewyan in conjunction with Willard

on my own neglect for not being more punctual in my correspondence.

"By a letter from Angus Bethune, I heard of Donald's [1] situation on the Columbia. It is one of considerable personal risk, but advantageous, had he been able to reach the proper hunting-grounds.

"It is now believed there are plenty of beaver in that country, and it will be very hard if it is wrested from him through the ignorance of our negotiators. That crafty cunning statesman, Gallatin—Astor's friend,—was the principal negotiator on the part of the Americans. He would be too many for our people, who are governed more by theory than practice.[2]

"Lady Mackenzie is sitting by me, and the children are playing on the floor. The former joins me most cordially in kind regards to you, Mrs M'Kenzie, and your young family.—Yours very truly and sincerely,

"ALEX. MACKENZIE."

This letter reveals a great deal. From it it is not difficult to glean that although Sir Alexander was living in the midst of plenty, surrounded by every comfort, and wrapped up in his home life, his thoughts oft reverted to the old days, when hunger, cold, wet, and hostile Indians

Wentzel in 1799, and became a partner in 1802. Had charge of the King's Post at Quebec. He disliked the Indians of the plains and also the voyageurs, who reciprocated cordially. He died at Quebec in 1849. A son, Keith, was in the Hudson Bay Company's service, and a daughter married Mr Patrick, one time clerk of the House of Commons.

[1] Donald Mackenzie, a third brother of Roderick, was one of those who left the N.-W. Company and joined the Astor concern, the Pacific Fur Company, as a partner, afterwards re-entering the service of the N.-W. Company, and afterwards that of the Hudson Bay Company, and became Governor of Red River. He died in 1851 at Mayville, N.Y.

[2] The negotiations referred to here were between Great Britain and the United States, with a view to settling the dispute respecting the boundary line between the States and British North America west of the Rocky Mountains, which resulted in the Convention of 1818. Albert Gallatin, named in Mackenzie's letter, was one of the U.S. representatives. He also was the U.S. plenipotentiary when the Oregon negotiations were reopened in 1826, and which resulted in a deadlock and the renewal of the agreement for a joint occupation.

conspired to imperil his life. And when he wrote that letter to his cousin, the grim reaper was even then lurking near at hand ready to cut him down while still a comparatively young man. As he sat at his desk writing, ever and anon glancing at the picture of domestic happiness he so succinctly describes, he must have felt that his days were numbered; but his indomitable will made him keep his face to the enemy, the inevitable conqueror, even as he had always faced without flinching the unstable savages in the far-western wilderness. Bright's disease, with its attendant cycle of pathological sequences, of which the foundation had been laid on his great voyages to the Arctic and Pacific, and his journeyings between Grande Portage and his distant posts, had fastened its grip upon him, and in a little more than a year after he penned the above letter to Roderick, death closed his earthly existence.

At the time Sir Alexander wrote to his cousin Roderick, he could only take carriage exercise "if not violent," and it would not have been possible for him to undertake then the long drive to Edinburgh. What was quite out of the question in 1819 seems to have become feasible in the spring of 1820, for he then journeyed to Edinburgh. Probably careful dieting and physical rest had produced an apparent improvement, and he believed his strength equal to the feat. Accompanied by his wife and their three children—Margaret Geddes, aged four years; Alexander George, two years old; and the baby, George, a few months old only—Sir Alexander made what proved to be his last earthly pilgrimage.

Here again the lapse of time, village gossip, and those apocryphal traditions that seem to spring up about the names and memorials of distinguished men, have produced contradictory accounts of an occurrence about which there should be no uncertainty, but which arise from time to time to disturb the equanimity of biographer and historian. One such account[1] states that Sir Alexander

[1] Chambers' 'Eminent Scotsmen,' vol. iii.

was taken ill at Mulnain, near Dunkeld, when travelling *to* Edinburgh with his wife and children, and died March 11th. Another story, given with circumstantial detail, tells how "the illness which led to his retirement and had persisted in weakening him for some years, entered on a more serious phase in January 1820, and Sir Alexander was compelled to journey south to seek the aid of physicians in Edinburgh. The travelling coach, driven by the family coachman Taylor, safely carried the invalid to his medical advisers, and when Sir Alexander desired to return, also brought him back. It was late at night when the coach with its occupants passed through Perth on the homeward journey. At some little distance from the town the coachman became alarmed, and stopped the coach. He had heard a cry or some such sound from his master, but on looking into the interior of the carriage, he found his charge was in *articulo mortis*, and ran to a neighbouring inn for human helpers and vain restoratives. Thus Sir Alexander passed from his earthly pilgrimage and struggles." [1]

Still another account says: "Very unexpectedly, on March 12th, 1820, Sir Alexander Mackenzie died. Returning home from a journey to London he was taken ill in the coach at Mulnain in Perthshire, and died there." [2]

From these several diverse versions of the fatal attack it would appear that the following letter, written to Roderick Mackenzie shortly after the occurrence, has been overlooked. It decides the question, and should set at rest any doubt respecting the place and time of Sir Alexander's death and the circumstances surrounding it:—

"MONTREAL, *12th May* 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—It is with the deepest regret I have to inform you of the death of my uncle, Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

"Accompanied by Lady Mackenzie and children, he was

[1] 'Ross-shire Journal,' August 7th, 1925.
[2] 'Makers of Canada,' vol. viii. p. 102.

on his way from Edinburgh to Ross-shire, and was suddenly taken ill at Mulnain, near Dunkeld, on the 11th March, and expired the following morning.—I am, dear Sir, your obd. servt., KENNETH DOWIE." [1]

"The Hon. Rod. M'Kenzie, Terrebonne."

The place-name given as Mulnain does not exist as such. It is possible that the name has either been spelt phonetically or the original handwriting might lend itself to that spelling being adopted. The place in reality is Mulinearn, a hamlet on the east bank of the River Tummel, a branch of the River Tay, about ten miles north-west of Dunkeld, and not far from the Pass of Killiecrankie. In the old coaching days Mulinearn was the next coaching station or post-house after leaving Dunkeld for the north. At the time of the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, Mulinearn Inn was a rendezvous for troops, especially for those of Bonnie Prince Charlie. In those days the spelling of the name varied a good deal, but the two in most common use were "Mulinarn," which might easily be transposed into Mulnain, and "Mulieinarn." The old inn in which Sir Alexander breathed his last no longer exists, but the place is marked by the present hamlet, a farm-steading with a few adjacent houses. The nearest railway station is Ballinluig.

With the assistance of the people of the inn, Sir Alexander, stricken unto death, was removed from the carriage and conveyed to a room of the old coaching-house, and there, on the following morning, in the presence of his wife and children, the illustrious traveller and explorer expired. His body was taken to Avoch, and there interred in the old churchyard. Gathered about his bier were his relatives and friends, together with the villagers and people of the countryside in whose welfare he had taken so deep an interest. A simple service, and reverently

[1] Masson's 'Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest,' vol. i.

the mortal remains of one of Britain's great empire-builders were laid at rest.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie was a man of vigorous mind and splendid physique. Of medium height, he was of compact build, muscularly very powerful, yet lithe and active, and endowed with great power of endurance. His features were regular; keen bright eyes, yet gentle withal; Grecian nose, firmly shaped mouth, and square chin. A mass of dark wavy hair crowned a noble head. Energetic, his zest was of the deliberate as opposed to the impetuous irritable type. One of his most notable characteristics was the expression of his eyes, which imparted to his features a kindly suavity that exercised a marvellous influence over his men, and materially contributed towards his success in dealing with the natives, who regarded all strangers with fear and suspicion, and more especially those of a complexion and habit of dress so different from their own. Among the British Columbia Indians he was known by the name of Me-tis-ra-netlon, which means "his hair is very abundant"; and the voyageurs, men who quickly took the measure of their leaders, applied to him the sobriquet of Kitchi Okema, because of his habit of making forced and rapid journeys.

His general character is indicated by his life and works: eager, industrious, persevering, unsparing of himself; deeply attached to his friends, implacable to those who used him ill; resourceful, steadfast, honourable; of a masterful temper and an indomitable will; a man of strong individuality, firmness, self-confidence, and determination.

After his death, Sir Alexander's widow, the gifted and beautiful Lady Mackenzie, continued to reside at Avoch with her daughter and two sons, going to London as usual for the season. During these periodic visits to town the house in Clarges Street was frequently the scene of festivity. Whether in London or Avoch, the education of the children was one of her first cares. A tutor was

provided for the two boys and a governess for the girl, thus laying a substantial foundation for the future years. The daughter, Margaret, early displayed a talent for drawing, and acquired, among other accomplishments, a considerable degree of skill in water-colour painting.

In 1832, during the absence of the family, Avoch House was burned and practically gutted, the fire starting from the big kitchen chimney, whence it spread to the library—the room in which Sir Alexander sat before the fire just before setting out on his last, and greatest, journey twelve years before. The library contained many valuables—Sir Alexander's instruments, maps, manuscripts of unpublished travels, and many other articles of historic value. Almost the entire contents of the room were consumed, very few things being saved by the sailors, fishermen, and villagers who flocked to the scene and did their utmost to salvage such articles of furniture, &c., as could be removed. Among the books saved from destruction was the French copy—Napoleon's—of Sir Alexander's travels and discoveries. Some articles taken from the burning house disappeared from view for some time, but ultimately found their way back to the possession of the rightful owners.

After the fire the family took up their residence at "The Square," which term is applied in remote parts of Scotland to the principal farm building on an estate. This building, which had been erected in Sir Alexander's lifetime, was fitted up for the reception of the family, and there they congregated upon their sorrowful return home.

In 1860 Lady Mackenzie died, having survived her husband forty years, and the Avoch estate passed into the hands of the elder son, Alexander George, who married Isabella Mary, a daughter of Simon Fraser of South Molton, Devonshire. Sir Alexander's other children, his daughter Geddes and younger son George, did not marry.

In 1868 Alexander George Mackenzie sold Avoch to his

cousin, Sir John Kirkland (son of Sir Alexander's elder sister Sybilla), and removed to The Deanery in the old cathedral town of Fortrose, a few miles distant, and once the property of the Bennetsfield Mathesons. Subsequently he and his family resided for a period at Wandsworth, London, where Alexander George's wife died in 1888, and was buried there. With her are buried two of her sons, George and Alastair. Alexander George died at Fortrose on March 28th, 1894, aged seventy-six years, and was interred in the family plot in Avoch Churchyard. In an obituary notice, a Scottish newspaper comments as follows :—

"On Wednesday night another link of the past was broken by the death of Mr A. G. Mackenzie of Avoch. The old laird, as he was affectionately and respectfully called, was a very great favourite in the district, where he had endeared himself by many acts of kindness, not only during his residence for the past few years but on the former occasion in which he lived at Avoch House. Mr Mackenzie was the elder son of the well-known American explorer, Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Avoch, and to whom belonged the honour of discovering the great Mackenzie River in 1789, the river being appropriately named after its famous discoverer. Mr Mackenzie was born in 1818, and had thus considerably gone beyond the allotted three-score years and ten. He is survived by three sons and two daughters."

Of those five children who survived their father, the three sons are all dead : Kenneth Thomas, the youngest, died of dysentery during the Boer War at Salisbury, Rhodesia, in September 1900 ; Alastair, the second son, died in 1919 ; and the eldest, George, died in London in 1923. The two daughters, Alexandra Isabel and Geddes Margaret, are living, the former being the wife of Mr Bernard Heald. Her sister is unmarried.

The Mackenzie burial-plot in the churchyard surrounding the ivy-clad church at Avoch, which was rebuilt in 1870, is

enclosed by a stone wall, into which is built the memorial stone to Sir Alexander and Lady Mackenzie. The stone bears the following inscriptions :—

In Memory of

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE OF AVOCH
THE EXPLORER OF THE NORTH-WEST OF AMERICA
AND DISCOVERER OF THE MACKENZIE RIVER
DIED 12TH MARCH 1820
AND
LADY GEDDES MACKENZIE OF AVOCH
HIS WIDOW
DIED 7TH JULY 1860.

Within the same walled-in plot is another memorial stone, on which is inscribed the following :—

In Memory of

ALEXANDER GEORGE, ELDEST SON OF
SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE OF AVOCH
BORN 14TH FEBRUARY 1818, DIED 28TH MARCH 1894

KENNETH THOMAS, YOUNGEST SON OF THE ABOVE
DIED AT SALISBURY, RHODESIA, 5TH SEPTEMBER 1900.

Neither of Sir Alexander's remaining children, Margaret Geddes, the eldest (born 1816), nor George, the youngest (born 1819), married. The latter, whose business was that of a wine merchant, died at Minehead in Somerset on April 9th, 1880, and is there interred. His elder brother, Alexander George, attended the funeral, and adjusted his estate. Their sister, Margaret Geddes, died on January 25th, 1888, and was buried in Old Greyfriar's Churchyard, Edinburgh, in the same grave as her aunt (her mother's twin and only sister, Margaret Elizabeth Mackenzie), after whom she was named. A memorial

stone was erected to her by her uncle, Captain Dowie, R.N., the inscription reading as follows :—

In Memory of

MARGARET GEDDES MACKENZIE OF AVOCH
BORN 2ND MAY 1816, DIED 25TH JANUARY 1888
DAUGHTER OF SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

This stone is erected by Captain James Dowie, of the Revenue cutter "Wellington," in grateful and affectionate remembrance of Margaret Mackenzie.

This lady made a number of water-colour sketches of Avoch and vicinity, and the writer has been fortunate in securing, by the kindness of one of her relatives, a number of them, some of which are reproduced in this volume. Her aunt, Margaret Elizabeth Mackenzie of Avoch and Applecross, married an Edinburgh solicitor of the Mackenzie clan, but not a blood relative (in this respect the twin sisters were identical, neither changing her surname upon marriage and neither marrying a relative), by whom she had a numerous family.

As already stated, Sir Alexander had two sisters. Sybilla, the elder, married John Kirkland, a successful Glaswegian merchant. They had several children, the eldest of whom became Sir John Kirkland, who received knighthood from Queen Victoria. Another son, Alexander Mackenzie Kirkland, was named after his uncle, the explorer.

Margaret Mackenzie, Sir Alexander's younger sister, married Captain James Dowie, R.N., commander of the revenue cutter *Wellington*. A daughter, Isabella, and a son, Kenneth, were among the fruit of this union. Mrs Dowie—Margaret Mackenzie—died in 1815. Subsequent to the death of his wife, Captain Dowie and his family removed to Camberwell, London, where many years later he died. His daughter, Isabella Dowie, married

her cousin, Alexander Mackenzie Kirkland, brother of Sir John; and of this marriage several children were born, among them two daughters—Sybilla Mackenzie, named after her grandmother's sister, and Margaret Dowie, born 1832, named after her grandmother. Miss Margaret Dowie Kirkland is still living at this writing, active, with memory undimmed, at the ripe age of ninety-four. Kenneth Dowie, the youngest son of Captain Dowie and his wife Margaret, went to Canada, and he it was who by letter from Montreal imparted the news of Sir Alexander's death to Roderick Mackenzie. Kenneth afterwards returned to England, and went into business as a merchant in Liverpool. He married Mary Muir of Glasgow, and their second son, James Muir Dowie, married Annie Chambers, a daughter of Robert Chambers, D.C.L., the Edinburgh publisher, a distant cousin. Of the issue of this marriage a son, Robert Chambers Dowie, and a daughter, Menie Muriel, are still living. Menie Muriel Dowie married twice, her first husband being Sir Harry Norman, son of a non-conformist minister, by whom she had one son; her second husband was Edward Fitzgerald, described as an author, but not the famed man of Boulge of the same name.

Avoch House is not now in possession of any of the Mackenzie family. When Sir John Kirkland—who had purchased the estate from his cousin, Alexander George Mackenzie, Sir Alexander's son—died, the property passed to his son, Major-General John Agmondisham Vesey Kirkland, who, upon finding that the lands connected with the house contained the sheltered fields of the "Home Farm" sheep and were leased to the tenant occupying the farm, sold the estate to the possessor of the adjoining property, Mr Douglas Fletcher, father of the present owner, Mr James Douglas Fletcher of Rosehaugh and Avoch.

For many years after the death of Sir Alexander, his portrait by Lawrence adorned the walls of Avoch House,

and afterwards those of the old Deanery at Fortrose, but subsequently it was sold and passed out of the possession of the family. Napoleon's copy of Mackenzie's 'Voyages,' in three volumes in French, is one of the treasured possessions of Mrs Heald, Sir Alexander's granddaughter.

It is interesting to note that on July 20th, 1893, the centenary of Mackenzie's memorable arrival at the Rock in Dean Channel, marking the successful termination of the overland journey to the Pacific coast, was commemorated at a meeting held in Victoria, British Columbia, at which it was decided that a portrait of the great explorer should be painted and hung up in Parliament Buildings in that city. This project was carried out, and the portrait now occupies a prominent place in the Legislative Library.

At Fort George, at the junction of the Nechaco with the Fraser River, a memorial cairn and bronze tablet, erected by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, were unveiled on June 13th, 1925. The inscription on the tablet reads thus :—

> "Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the first white man to cross the Rocky Mountains and reach the Pacific Coast, passed this spot, westward bound, in his canoe, with his nine companions, on the 19th of June 1793."

It is gratifying to know that the site of Sir Alexander's Rock, his farthest point west, and upon whose face he painted the inspiring words announcing his achievement, has not only been officially recognised by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, but, acting under instructions of that Board, Mr J. P. Forde, Resident Engineer at Victoria, B.C., of the Department of Public Works of Canada, in November 1926 erected thereon a monument bearing a bronze tablet as a permanent memorial in honour of the explorer and his work. Almost





South-east face of rock on which Mackenzie slept, 22nd July 1793.

immediately below the foot of the monument, on the face of bare rock, the legend placed there by Sir Alexander has been reproduced, carved in the rock, and the space filled in with red cement in imitation of the red paint used by Mackenzie. The monument is of cement, is of plain but dignified design, and, being so prominently placed, presents an attractive appearance and is visible for a long distance. The situation of the monument and of the inscription on the rock are indicated in the accompanying photograph of the Rock. The bronze tablet bears the following words :—

"HISTORIC SITES AND MONUMENTS BOARD OF CANADA.

"SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

"This rock is the Western terminus of the first journey across the Continent of North America.

"It was made by Alexander Mackenzie of the North-West Company, who, with his nine companions, arrived at this spot on the 21st July 1793.

"Mackenzie, by observations, ascertained his position, spent the night here, and after writing on the south-east face the words now cut therein, retraced his course to Lake Athabasca.

"This transcontinental journey preceded by more than ten years that of Lewis and Clark.

"Erected 1926."

The official unveiling of the memorial will take place during the summer of 1927, and will be a function of considerable importance, at which Canadian historians and representatives of both Dominion and Provincial (British Columbia) Governments will be present and take part in the proceedings.

CHAPTER XI.

MACKENZIE'S ACHIEVEMENTS AND INFLUENCE.

WHILE Mackenzie was in England in connection with the publication of his book, he took advantage of the opportunity thus offered to urge upon Lord Hobart, the Colonial Secretary at that time, the desirability of bringing about a union, a pooling of interests, of the great commercial organisations operating under the British flag—the North-West and X. Y. Companies, the Hudson's Bay Company, the East India Company, and the South Sea Company.

Had his suggestions been received with greater sympathy, had the Government made an effort to bring about the union advocated by Mackenzie, the foundation would have been laid then for the superstructure of a great system of commercial Imperialism. Unfortunately there was a lamentable lack of vision in the majority of British statesmen of that period. Mackenzie's suggestions fell upon unresponsive ears, and nothing was done. Had it been otherwise, had all his proposals been acted upon, there is little room for doubt but that the British Empire would be the richer to-day by that portion of the North-West coast of North America now known as the states of Oregon and Washington. Mackenzie submitted his proposals in the form of what he called "Preliminaries," which are given in full in the Appendix to this volume, and with them he sent the following covering letter :—

"NORFOLK STREET, *7th Jan.* 1802.

"MY LORD,—In obedience to Command I have now the honour of transmitting to Your Lordship, enclosed, a Project of 'Preliminaries to the establishment of a permanent Fishery and Trade in Furs, &c., in the interior and on the West Coast of North America'—expressive of the result of my experience and deliberation on the great National object.

"It will require some management of mediate the Coalition of the two Companies at Montreal in such a manner as to fix the System of Enterprise necessary for carrying the combination of the Fishery and Fur Trade into effect, as some of the oldest members are likely to prefer continuing in the Beaten track. Let *such* be at full liberty to do as they please; but if the Government should think fit to confide to me the *licences* in question for the behoof of such as shall accede, and at the same time to recommend it to the Governor of Canada to countenance me in my endeavours to bring it about, as a measure which has the sanction of, and will be protected by Government; I have not the least doubt of succeeding with all those, whose *personal* exertions are essential; indeed, infinitely more essential than the Capital of the others, since the former can only be replaced by Juniors successively growing up in the Service, during a period of six to ten years; whereas the latter, and any larger sum that may be found to be necessary or employed to advantage, can be raised at any time by recurring to London, and might be raised in London before my departure, were it not thought that those already in trade at Montreal ought to have the preference, and others only the accession to it.

"I intend to embark on my return to America towards the end of the Month; and if there is any service which I may be deemed capable of there performing, it will give me pleasure to take charge of it.—I have the honour to be, My Lord, your Lordship's Devoted and most faithful Hble. Servant,

"ALEX. MACKENZIE."

It will be observed that Sir Alexander did not hide from himself the difficulties that might arise in attempting

to bring about a coalition of the North-West Company and the X. Y. Company.

According to Mackenzie's "Preliminaries" it was proposed to establish a supreme civil and military post at Nootka, on Vancouver Island, which position is roughly given as 50° N. latitude, with two subordinate stations—one on the Columbia River, latitude 46°, and the other at Sea-Otter Harbour, latitude 55°. He proposed either a repeal of the Acts giving an exclusive right to the East India and South Sea Companies of fishery, trade, and navigation in the Pacific Ocean and on the north-west coast, or, in default of that, to obtain irrevocable and unlimited licences from these Companies to carry on trade and fishing, and to establish factories and agents in Canton or elsewhere for the sale or trade of their exports and imports. Further, another clause provided for obtaining from the Hudson's Bay Company a "Licence of Transit" permitting transportation of goods through the Hudson's Bay territories, and restricting the right of the Hudson's Bay Company to have a manifest presented and examination made at the first port of entry within the limits of the Company's jurisdiction, but not at any other station or trading post.

Sir Alexander did not succeed in forming his coalition company ere he returned to Montreal. On October 25th of that same year, evidently smarting under a sense of disappointment that his exertions had been in vain, he wrote to Mr John Sullivan, Under-Secretary, enclosing copies of a letter written by John Richardson (of Forsyth, Richardson, & Co.), dated October 21st, 1802, to H. W. Ryland, the Lieut.-Governor's secretary, and of the Grand Jury's Presentment made at Montreal on September 19th of the same year, which papers, he said, would show that he had not succeeded, as also the improbability of his being able to bring about a union of the North-West and X. Y. Companies, which Lord Hobart had recommended as the first step towards

the fruition of the project, unless the Government intervened as he suggested. He said: "Without the aid of the Government by granting the licences to one of the contending Parties, with the condition that the other Party should have the option of sharing, in proportion of the amount of the Trade they might be then carrying on to that part of His Majesty's Dominions, I see no means of bringing about a coalition for several years to come, by which time the trade may be reduced, if not ruined, and the opportunity of making the Western establishment lost perhaps for ever."

Those words written by Mackenzie were almost prophetic. Had the Government established the post at Nootka, with subordinate posts at the mouth of the Columbia River and at Sea-Otter Harbour, what a difference there would have been in the history of the north-west coast! The British Government did nothing, and the opportunity neglected of exercising authority over the Oregon country was indeed lost for ever.

In his letter to Mr Ryland, referred to by Sir Alexander, John Richardson set forth in plain language the bitter hostility existing between the North-West and the X. Y. Companies, the latter being viewed, he stated, by the North-West Company "with a Jealousy and Rancour improper in the Subjects of the same Empire." He complained that the Indians had been incited to pillage and attack the canoes of the X. Y. Company. He pointed out that "retaliation may become frequent," and "force may generally prevail over Justice. The consequences may be dreadful to contemplate, and the Fur Trade must in the end be annihilated, if a competent Jurisdiction is not established in the Canadas for the Investigation of Crimes and Criminal Offences committed in the British part of the Indian Country beyond their limits."

The other "paper" sent in by Mackenzie, the Presentment of the Grand Jury at Montreal, also urged that "His Majesty's Tribunals in Canada should be

invested with jurisdiction in places . . . beyond their limits." The judges of the King's Bench and Lieut.-Governor Milnes also favoured the extension of the jurisdiction of the Canadian Courts to the Indian country.

In consequence of these representations thus thrust by Mackenzie upon the attention of the Colonial Office, an Act was passed in 1803 giving jurisdiction to the Canadian Courts as requested.

Nothing was done, however, to carry out the proposals submitted by Mackenzie in his "Preliminaries," and while the onus of this inaction must rest upon Lord Hobart, it must be confessed, in all justice, that the communications sent by Sir Robert Milnes appear to have been strongly tinctured with the influence of the North-West Company, and may have afforded a measure of excuse for his remissness. In December 1802 the Colonial Secretary requested Sir Robert Milnes to give early consideration to the subject of establishing a chartered company—Mackenzie's design—and to state fully his opinions thereon. The reply was long deferred. In September 1803 the Lieut.-Governor forwarded to Mr Sullivan, the Colonial Under-Secretary, a statement received from the North-West Company, and recommended Mr M'Gillivray, one of the partners of the North-West Company, as one who could give full information about the fur trade. With the receipt of that communication the matter appears to have ceased to receive any further attention from the Government.

On September 15th, 1802, General Hunter transmitted to Lord Hobart a report by Colonel Mann on a Memorandum by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, suggesting the feasibility of opening navigation from Montreal to Lake Ontario by a canal fourteen miles in length, and urging capitalists in London to carry out this project rather than invest in another scheme for the construction, through American territory, of a canal to the same lake from Albany in the state of New York. Colonel Mann

in his report agreed that Sir Alexander's proposal was practicable. Mr Douglas Brymner, Canadian Archivist, commenting on this, states: "Whatever may have been Sir Alexander's exact plans, his scheme has been substantially carried out with the addition of the Lachine Canal."

What Mackenzie did in the way of exploration provided much of the impulse that resulted in the subsequent explorations of Simon Fraser and David Thompson, men like himself, intrepid, fearless, inspired by a greater motive than selfish aggrandisement. To this trio belongs the credit of having saved for the British Empire what portion of the north-west coast appertains to the Dominion of Canada, the province of British Columbia. Had these men not made the explorations with which their names will be for ever associated, the United States would have secured it, even as they claimed it. By the terms of the Nootka Convention, Spain abandoned all claim to sovereignty over the north-west coast, but it was never transferred to any other power. The land was open to seisin by any nation entering into actual occupation, and exercising dominion over it. That was done for Great Britain by the North-West Company, whose agents Mackenzie, Fraser, and Thompson were. Mackenzie reached the Pacific Coast at a most critical and opportune moment.

The success of his journey to the Pacific completely satisfied Mackenzie. He no longer felt the urge to seek for that river of the west which he thought to be Cook's River, but the information he had elicited from the Loocheux, Dog Ribs, and the Hare Indians of the Mackenzie River, respecting the unexplored western waterway, he passed on to his colleagues. Several times that exploration was considered, but no definite mention of any person being named to undertake it was made until after the death of Mackenzie. In a letter written by W. F. Wentzel to Roderick Mackenzie in March

1824, he states that "Many plans are suggested for exploring the unknown parts of Mackenzie's River, and none have yet been digested, excepting that Mr Samuel Black is to start this spring from the upper parts of Peace River with a clerk and eight men and proceed up Finlay's branch, and from thence to cross the Rocky Mountains and seek for a large river said to follow this range of heights towards the westward, from whence he is to try to make his way to Mackenzie's River. This plan appears to me to be wild and injudicious, because Mr Black is unable to ascertain by observation in what latitude and longitude he may find himself in. . . . But, unfortunately, this quarter is less known than it ought to be. . . ."

With what cool indifference the partners at Grande Portage or Fort William assigned such exploratory work to their traders and men, and, more remarkable still, how cheerfully those tasks were taken, and generally, thoroughly carried through to a successful issue! Had it been thought there would be found a great fur-producing region at the North Pole, the fur-traders would have discovered it a century earlier than Peary!

Samuel Black did not make that exploration, however, but it was done instead partially by John Finlay, who ascended the Finlay to its source at Lake Thutade in 1824, returning without making any attempt to find either the unknown western river or to make his way across the mountains to the Mackenzie. It was not until 1840 that the western river of the north was discovered by Robert Campbell. He descended Pelly River, which is identical with the Yukon, and in 1843 followed it to where, three years later, J. Bell established a post at the mouth of the Porcupine River, a tributary of the Yukon. Campbell, arriving at the confluence, turned eastward, ascended the Porcupine, crossed the height of land to the Peel River, which he descended to where it empties into the Mackenzie at the upper

end of the delta, thus accomplishing what Mackenzie had in mind to do when he left Forks Fort in May 1793. His informants had not misled him. There *was* a great river flowing to the west, at the far side of the mountains from where the Indians first told of its existence; but it was not discovered by any white man until Campbell embarked upon its waters half a century later.

By that time the Mackenzie River was no longer left to natives for their sole benefit and convenience. For years it had seen the canoes of the fur-traders travelling from post to post which had been established on it. The Indians no longer took flight at the appearance of the whites, but there always lived in their memories the recollection of Mackenzie. Not only fur-traders but other explorers made it a highway by which to reach the scene of their investigations, Franklin, Richardson, Dease, Simpson, &c., so that the appearance of Europeans on its waters became quite a familiar event.

In the appendix of his 'Voyages,' Mackenzie describes what he considered to be the boundaries of the British possessions in North America, and in the west lays claim to much of the territory now included in the United States. He refers to it as the "second division. The line of the second division may be traced from that of the first at St Mary's,[1] from which also the American boundary runs, and is said to continue through Lake Superior (and through a lake called Long Lake, which has no existence) to the Lake of the Woods, in latitude 49° 37′ N., from whence it is also said to run west to the Mississippi, which it may do, by giving it a good deal of Southing, but not otherwise; as the source of that river does not extend further North than Latitude 47° 38′ N., where it is no more than a small brook; consequently, if Great Britain retains the right of entering it along the line of division, it must be in a lower latitude, and wherever that may be the line must be continued

[1] Sault St. Marie.

West till it terminates in the Pacific Ocean, to the South of the Columbia. This division is then bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the West, the Frozen Sea and Hudson's Bay on the North and East. The Russians, indeed, may claim with justice the islands and coast from Behring's Strait to Cook's Entry."

His book also contains, in the same appendix, a general statement respecting the topography of Western Canada, and of its resources and potentialities. He speaks, for example, of the existence of coal and bitumen along the Mackenzie River and along the Peace, and says: "and the same was observed by Mr Fidler, one of the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company, at the source of the South branch of the Saskatchewine." He also mentions the presence of coal on Slave Lake near its discharge by Mackenzie's River; and also near the forks of the Elk River." He gave the world its first knowledge of what are called the Barren Lands, which region, he says, "is inhabited by a people who are accustomed to the life it requires. Nor has a bountiful nature withheld the means of subsistence—the reindeer, which supply both food and clothing. . . . Their small lakes are not furnished with a great variety of fish, but such as they produce are excellent, which, with hares and partridges, form a portion of their food."

The climate of the country, the character of its great plains, its salt deposits and other resources are dealt with, furnishing the outside world with a fund of information of Western Canada never before presented.

In his book, as well as his personal advocacy with Lord Hobart of the commercial union of the several great companies then in existence, he speaks of the advantages that would accrue from a union between the North-West Companies and the Hudson's Bay Company. He says: "The junction of such a commercial association with the Hudson's Bay Company is the important measure which I would propose, and the trade

might then be carried on with a very superior degree of advantage, both private and public, under the privilege of their charter, and would prove in fact the complete fulfilment of the conditions on which it was first granted."

"It would be an equal injustice to either party to be excluded from the option of such an undertaking; for if the one has a right by charter, has not the other a right by prior possession, as being successor to the subjects of France, who were exclusively possessed of all the then known parts of this country before Canada was ceded to Great Britain, and having themselves been the discoverers of a vast extent of country since added to His Majesty's territories, even to the Hyperborean and the Pacific Oceans?" This last reference to his own exploits, to which he points with pardonable pride, indicates that he fully realised the vast importance to his native country of his achievements in discovery.

Sir Alexander's advocacy in 1801 of a union between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North-Westers, was vigorously supported by Edward Ellice of Spring Gardens, Middlesex, a member of the North-West Company, who in 1804 actually offered Sir Richard Neave, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, to purchase the latter concern for £103,000, the amount of the then capital stock of the Company, and this transaction might have been carried to a successful issue but for the legal difficulties encountered in the way of disposing of stock held for minors.

He was the first to advocate the freedom of the navigable waterways to all comers, and was the forerunner of the advocates of a transcontinental line of transportation by the waterways of the country. He was of the opinion that the Government should oblige the Hudson's Bay Company, should they decline the proposed amalgamation, to throw open the navigation of Hudson's Bay to Nelson's River, "and by its waters, a passage to and from the interior country. By these waters that discharge

themselves into Hudson's Bay at Port Nelson, it is proposed to carry on the trade to their source, at the head of the Saskatchiwine River, which rises in the Rocky Mountains, not eight degrees of longitude from the Pacific Ocean. The Tacoutche or Columbia River [1] flows also from the same mountains, and discharges itself likewise in the Pacific, in latitude 46° 20'. Both of them are capable of receiving ships at their mouths, and are navigable throughout for boats. . . . By opening this intercourse between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and forming regular establishments through the interior and at both extremes, as well as along the coasts and islands, the entire command of the fur trade of North America might be obtained. . . . To this may be added the fishing in both seas, and the markets of the four quarters of the globe. . . . Then would this country begin to be remunerated for the expenses it has sustained in discovering and surveying the coast of the Pacific Ocean, which is at present left to American adventurers."

The East India Company obtained a charter from Queen Elizabeth in 1600 for "the discovery of Cathay and divers other regions, dominions, islands, and places unknown." They were granted exclusive trading privileges in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and they monopolised the trade in China and India. Canton was, at the time of the maritime fur-traders and the early days of the North-West Company, a profitable mart for the disposal of furs. The East India Company, exercising the privileges conferred by their charter, discriminated against British traders and merchants, but treated those of foreign States more generously. Perhaps it was because of this that some of the British ships actually sailed under foreign flags. It was undoubtedly because of that discrimination that the North-West Company diverted some of their furs from the usual route *viâ* England to China,

[1] He is here referring to the Fraser, which he erroneously believed to be the Columbia.

to send them through the United States channels, as related on a foregoing page. The East India Company pursued the same injurious policy for many years.

In the earlier years of the North-West Company the returns from the western and northern trading posts were sent overland to Rainy Lake, whence they were taken to Grande Portage and Montreal, in due time reaching the London market, and from there a large number of furs were sent to China. A portion, instead of being sent to England, were conveyed from Montreal or Grande Portage to New York, and thence shipped to China in American bottoms. After the acquisition by the North-West Company of Astor's Company, with its posts at Astoria and the interior of the country west of the Rocky Mountains, instead of furs being sent across country to Rainy Lake, they were shipped direct to China.

The first vessel to sail from Astoria, at the mouth of the Columbia River, to China so laden was the *Isaac Todd,* in the year 1814. In that same year the schooner *Columbia* was sent out from England with supplies for Astoria, or Fort George as it was then called, and in the following year the *Columbia* proceeded to Canton with more furs. These, and other vessels engaged in the trade, were of British register, belonging to and outfitted by the London agents of the North-West Company. The East India Company refused to permit them to carry tea and other Chinese goods to England, in return for the furs sold in China, while United States vessels were granted that privilege without demur, and thus had remunerative cargoes each way.

To overcome this handicap the North-West Company arranged with the firm of Perkins & Co. of Boston, Massachusetts, to act as their agents. British goods intended for the Columbia River were sent to Boston in British ships, and from there transferred to American vessels and taken to their destination. The next step was the carrying of the furs from the Columbia River

to China by the same vessels, which there took on a cargo of tea, &c., that a British ship would have been denied, with which the return voyage was made to Boston. There the tea was loaded on the North-West Company's ships and conveyed to London. In this way the unpatriotic policy of the East India Company was circumvented, and it was the knowledge of these facts that led to Mackenzie's proposal for a union of interests.

In the appendix to his 'Voyages,' Mackenzie says somewhat sarcastically: "It would be very unbecoming in me to suppose for a moment that the East India Company would hesitate to allow those privileges to their fellow-subjects which are permitted to foreigners, in a trade that is so much out of the line of their own commerce, and therefore cannot be injurious to it.

"Many political reasons, which it is not necessary here to enumerate, must present themselves to the mind of every man acquainted with the enlarged system and capacities of British commerce in support of the measure which I have very briefly suggested, as promising the most important advantages to the trade of the United Kingdoms."

It was not, however, until 1821 that the Hudson's Bay and North-West Companies joined forces as Mackenzie had urged twenty years before. The proposed amalgamation with the East India Company did not materialise. In 1833 the British Parliament deprived them of their trading privileges, and thus shorn of their main sources of wealth their position became anomalous. Had Mackenzie's suggestion been adopted at the time it was made, how much ill-feeling, bloodshed, waste of time, money, and energy would have been avoided!

The Rev. Dr D. Masson of Edinburgh, a friend of the descendants of Sir Alexander, states that Mackenzie's book was one of Napoleon's favourites, and that at his behest it was translated into French. A copy of it in

three volumes had a place in his library during his exile at St Helena. Dr Masson had the privilege of examining these volumes, then in possession of the explorer's grandson, at the Deanery at Fortrose. There he was also given the opportunity of reading a most interesting manuscript, in autograph, by Napoleon, which sheds new light on the Emperor's secret schemes in the plan of his campaign against Great Britain. The reading of Mackenzie's 'Voyages' gave him the idea of attacking the enemy nation in her Canadian possessions, not by direct assault but by a circuitous route, which he believed would be an effective surprise and prove infallible. Reference is made to this subject in a very interesting letter written by William Mackenzie of Gairloch, an old friend of Sir Alexander, to the latter's son, the heir of Avoch. It is as follows:—

"LEAMINGTON, *May 24th*, 1856.

"When in Stockholm in 1824, Lord Bloomfield, our minister there, did me the honour of presenting me to the King—Bernadotte, father of the present king of Sweden. At the King's special request the audience was a private one, and I was further especially requested to oblige by coming in my full Highland dress. The audience lasted fully an hour. Such an interest did Napoleon's first and most fortunate marshal take in everything which was Highland, not even the skean dhu escaped him, etc., etc. I now come to your family portion of the audience.

"As we chatted on (old Bernadotte leaning upon my o'keachan, claymore), he was pleased to say, in that *suaviter in modo* for which his eagle eye so fitted him: 'Yes, I repeat it—you Highlanders are deservedly proud of your country and your forefathers, and your people are a race apart, distinct from all the rest of Britain in high moral as well as martial bearing, and long, I hope, may you feel and show it outwardly by this noble distinction in dress. But allow me to observe, sir, that in your family name and in the name Mackenzie there is a very predominant lustre, which shall never be

obliterated from my mind. Pray, are you connected in any way with Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the celebrated North American traveller, whose name and researches are immortalised by his discoveries in the Arctic Ocean and of the river which since then does honour to his name ?'

"I informed His Majesty that as a boy I had known him well, and that our families and his were nearly connected. This seemed to give me still greater favour with him, for, familiarly putting his hand on my shoulder brooch, he replied that, on that account alone, his making my acquaintance gave him great satisfaction. He then proceeded to tell Lord Bloomfield and me how your father's name had become familiar to him, and so much valued in his eyes.

"He said that at one time Napoleon had arranged to distract the affairs of Britain by attacking her Canadian possessions, not by a direct descent upon them, but by a route which would take England quite by surprise and prove infallible. That route was to be of the Mississippi, Ohio, etc., up to our Canadian border lakes. For this arrangements were to be made with America—New Orleans occupied as a *pied-a-terre* by France, etc.

"The organisation and command of this gigantic enterprise, as Bernadotte said, 'was given to me by the Emperor with instructions to make myself master of any work which could bear upon it, and the facilities the nature of the country afforded. Foremost among these the work of your namesake (Sir Alexander Mackenzie) was recommended, but how to get at it, with all communication with England interdicted, all knowledge of English unknown to us, seemed a difficulty not easily to be got over. However, as every one knows, my then master, L'Empereur, was not the man to be overcome by such small difficulties. The book, a huge quarto, was procured through smugglers, and in an inconceivably short space of time most admirably translated into French for my especial use. I need hardly add with what interest I perused and reperused that admirable work, till I made myself so thoroughly master of it that I could almost fancy myself (this he said laughing heartily) taking your Canada *en revers* from the upper waters, and ever since then I have never

ceased to look upon the home and think of the author with more than ordinary respect and esteem.'

"After a short pause and a long-drawn breath, almost amounting to a sigh, accompanied by a look at Bloomfield and a most expressive 'Ah, my lord, que des changements depuis ces jours-la!' Bernadotte concluded by saying that the Russian campaign had knocked that of Canada on the head until Russia was crushed, but it had pleased God to ordain it otherwise—'et maintenant me voilà Roi Suède' (his exact words as he concluded these compliments to your father). So much for old recollections of my sunny days of youth.—Yours faithfully,

"WM. MACKENZIE,
(Gairloch).

"To George Mackenzie, Esqre., Avoch."

Mrs Heald, Sir Alexander's granddaughter, in a letter to the writer, says: "I have the 3 volumes that belonged to Napoleon of grandpapa's voyages." In them is written—Napoleon's copy from St Helena. It is also stamped with the French eagle. This book contains an engraving of Lawrence's portrait of Sir Alexander, and also a map showing his travels in 1789.

Sir Sandford Fleming, commenting on Mackenzie's book, says: "Every page of Mackenzie's journal shows that his explorations were not effected without constant toil and great privations. The discouragements arising from the difficulties and dangers he experienced, and they were incessant, had no influence on his cool determination and dauntless spirit. The many tedious and weary days of physical labour and mental strain, the gloomy and inclement nights to which he was constantly exposed, were not, however, passed in vain. He gained his great reward in the knowledge that he had, in the interests of his country, attained the object of his design. He had penetrated a vast continent, for the most part in a condition of wild nature; he had overcome the

obstacles imposed by rapid rivers previously unknown, by rugged mountain ranges, by distance, by intervening forests, and by the extremes of a variable climate. From time to time obstacles presented themselves in the enmity of hostile native tribes, who had never before looked upon the face of a white man; but on the day he arrived at the Pacific coast he had the unqualified satisfaction of feeling that his undertakings had been crowned with complete success."

After Mackenzie's return to Fort Chipewyan from his journey to the Pacific, no steps were taken by the North-West Company to turn to their advantage the information he brought of the resources in furs of the country west of the Rocky Mountains. It was not until five years later that any other individual associated with the Company followed the discoverer's footsteps over Rocky Mountain Portage. In 1798 James Finlay, he who had been stationed at New Establishment on the Peace River in 1792, and whom Mackenzie would have taken with him had he been more robust, crossed the mountains by the same route taken by his chief. Ascending the Peace to the junction of the two branches, he chose to follow the northern fork instead of the southern taken by Mackenzie, and subsequently named the Parsnip River. The north branch, the main source of the Peace, and therefore the headwaters of the Great Mackenzie system, bears the name of Finlay, after the man who first explored it.

When, after the death of Simon M'Tavish, Mackenzie busied himself in the affairs of the newly amalgamated North-West and X. Y. Companies, another member of the same organisation, Simon Fraser, was preparing to turn to account Mackenzie's discoveries west of the mountains, and established Rocky Mountain House on the Peace at the foot of the great rapids that make the twelve-mile portage imperative. Fraser was bound for the Tacoutche, the river that both Mackenzie and he believed

to be the Columbia, for Captain Gray's discovery of that stream was, long ere the date of the publication of Mackenzie's book, common property. Fraser was inclined to be critical of his predecessor, and finds fault with Mackenzie for several omissions in describing his route of travel, but the old adage about the beam and the mote has application to the critic himself, for he was not infallible either. It was not Fraser, however, who was the third civilised man to visit the upper waters of the Peace River, but James M'Dougall, one of his subordinates, and he it was who discovered the Pack River, a tributary of the Parsnip that Mackenzie had not seen. Beginning with the year 1805, trading posts were first established in what is now British Columbia, but then known as New Caledonia, and three years later Fraser made his historic journey to the sea and discovered he had descended a river other than the Columbia, the river that now bears his name.

While Fraser was busy with his trading posts in New Caledonia, and the Mackenzie impulse still prevailed, another servant of the North-West Company, David Thompson, crossed the Rocky Mountains farther south, reached the Columbia River proper, and established trading posts on it and its tributaries, the first of his posts being founded at Windermere Lake, one of the two lake sources of the Columbia, in 1807. But even as James M'Dougall had been the forerunner of Fraser, so were Jaco Finlay—half-brother of the discoverer of the Finlay River—and Finan M'Donald the forerunners of David Thompson, who was the first to explore the Columbia from its source to its outlet.

The labours of these two men, Fraser and Thompson, supplemented those of Mackenzie. The latter found and showed the way; the others followed and planted the trading posts that brought to the North-West Company immense profits, that more than repaid many times over the cost of Mackenzie's explorations that

opened the way. Trading posts were established on the Mackenzie, on the Liard, on the Peel; and other traders, plunging into the wilds, founded posts in the northern interior of British Columbia and in the Yukon. The impulse for all these activities came from Alexander Mackenzie. In his footsteps followed Franklin, Richardson, Dease, Simpson, and other Arctic explorers who made his river the highway for reaching their respective fields of investigation.

Mackenzie was not one who loved the wilds—nature unspoiled and unadorned. His preference lay in the delights and comforts of social intercourse with his fellows amid the advantages of civilisation. "I begin to think," he wrote to his friend and cousin, "it is the height of folly in a man to reside in a country of this kind, deprived of every comfort that can render life agreeable, especially when he has a competency to enjoy life in a civilised society, which ought to be the case with me." His was not the mind of the nomad. The wanderlust had not part in the economy of his character. His journeys into the unknown wilds, north and west, were not the result of the mere desire to gratify idle curiosity, but were undertaken of deliberate purpose for a definite end. In his determination to continue at all hazards until that end had been achieved, he was inflexible. It had been easy for him to have abandoned his quest at any time. A less determined man might have not unwillingly made the unruly conduct of his men an excuse for escaping from dangers and discomforts inseparable from such expeditions. The spirit that dominated Mungo Park, David Livingstone, John Franklin, and a host of others, a thirst to extend geographical knowledge, to enlarge the field of operations of his Company, to achieve something that none other had yet succeeded in accomplishing, inspired him to endure all manner of privations and physical sufferings.

Little did he dream as he floated on the bosom of the

majestic Mackenzie, that one of the greatest of the world's oil-fields lay there awaiting the enterprise of a future generation, that large vessels luxuriously equipped and provided with all the comforts of, and more, of the best hotels in his native land at that date, would ply on his Grand River, and that the then ungovernable natives would be subjugated by a handful of constables and a few missionaries.

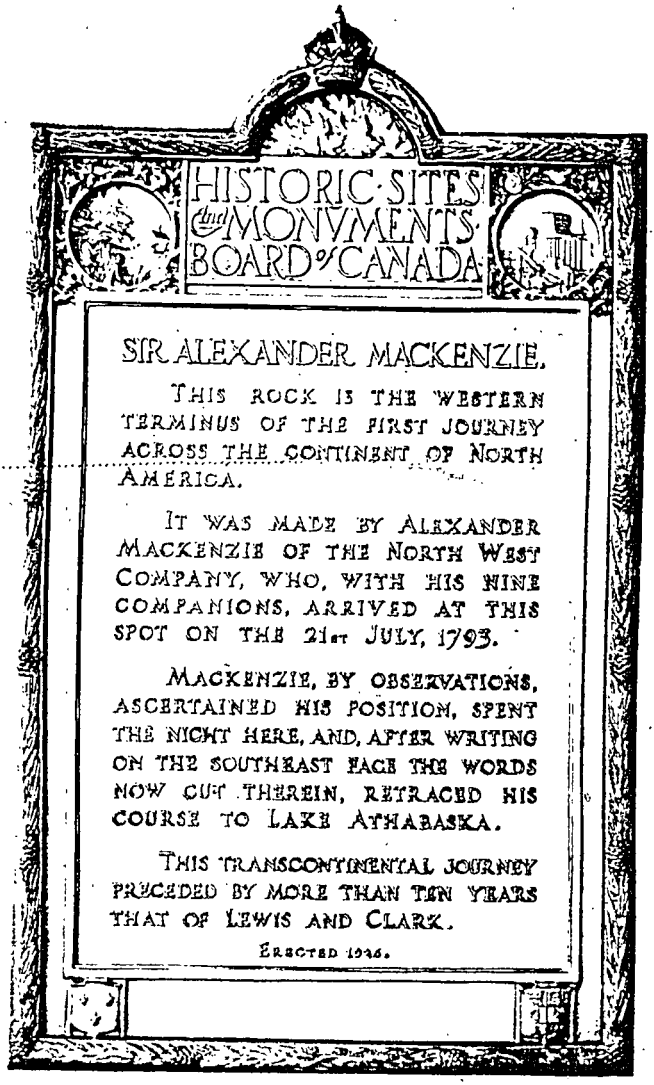
Nor did his wildest flights of imagination conjure up such scenes as he would now witness could he again journey along his Unjigah River, immense tracts of cultivated land producing enormous crops of wheat, and herds of prime beef cattle grazing on the adjacent hills and plains, the Indian lodges replaced by settlers' homes, and the warriors by peaceful farmers. Nor did his active and fertile brain conceive that bands of steel would skirt the banks of the Tacoutche Tesse, conveying passengers from his old headquarters at Montreal to the object of his quest, the Pacific Ocean, within the space of less than a week.

As a fur-trader he amassed a competency; as a man he made many friends and did his duty to himself and to his neighbour with a good conscience; as a husband and father he was all that could be wished. As an explorer and discoverer he proved himself to be endowed with all the qualities that make for success—determination, upright in his dealings with the natives, inflexible in his purpose, considerate and thoughtful for the safety of those with him whose services rendered it possible for him to accomplish his designs.

Too many of the brave men who have done things that count, who have achieved successes that have extended the benign influences of civilisation, whose lives have been shining examples for others to emulate, suffer effacement at the hands of posterity. Monuments and statues adorn the public places of our cities and towns, and State buildings, libraries, and municipal

halls, but how few of these are memorials of those whose activities have been expended in the cause of peace, and how many are in memory of those who have gained renown on the field of war, by land or sea! Where is there a fitting memorial to Alexander Mackenzie, the pathfinder, the discoverer of two great rivers, the discoverer of the fallacy of the much sought North-West Passage by sea, the first to discover and make the north-west passage by land? To our shame be it acknowledged there is none. His sole memorials are the record of his knighthood, the gracious acknowledgement by his sovereign of his exploits; his book, which will endure throughout the ages; a tablet let into the wall of a house in Montreal; a tablet and cairn at Fort George, B.C.; a Monument with Bronze Tablet erected at Western Terminus of first journey across the Continent of North America; a portrait, and the stone at the head of his grave in the old churchyard at Avoch in the north of Scotland. Those, and no more.

It has been suggested by Mr Harlan I. Smith of Ottawa, that a tract of country on the coast of British Columbia, near the mouth of the Bella Coola River, be made into a park, a national memorial to the great discoverer. In a paper published in the 1924 'Annual Report of the Canadian Historical Association,' Mr Smith earnestly advocates that "a strip of country, approximately seventy miles long east and west by some twenty miles wide north and south, be set aside as a great out-of-doors museum for the conservation and sanctuary of wild life, both animal and plant, for the preservation of Indian petroglyphs and other historic sites—all this to be a national monument to Sir Alexander Mackenzie. . . . This area lies immediately south of the Bella Coola Valley, and is as yet unsurveyed, its title being in the Crown. This being the case, it would be unnecessary to go to any expense to have the park established. The area has in it many glaciers and innumerable waterfalls. Practically



Bronze Tablet on Mackenzie Memorial Monument, Dean Channel, British Columbia.

Erected by Canadian Government (Historical Sites and Monuments Board).

all of it is high land, which will never be used for agricultural purposes. With the possible exception of the eastern part, it lies in an area which the geologists indicate is not likely to be valuable for its minerals, and much of it is above the timber line. Like a great monument, in some places over 10,000 feet high, it overlooks the spot where the first white man to cross Canada reached the sea, and it in turn with its lofty peaks was seen by him as he came down the valley and embarked on the waters of the Pacific. . . .

"If my suggestion to establish Mackenzie Park is carried out, visitors to the region will soon find there are many delightful and interesting side trips which may be taken from the vicinity of the park to such places as the historic sites above mentioned, and to many beautiful natural features. They may in fact well spend many months in the Bella Coola Valley viewing the beauties of the park without ever going up into it, and they will find, in the eastern portion of the area at least, that the usual objection to the rainy weather of the Pacific coast cannot be entertained. In fact, the entire park is dry during the summer months. It is free from violent storms and mosquitoes.

"When the profits to Canada from the money spent by foreign tourists in visiting this area are sufficient, the roadway up the Bella Coola Valley might be improved throughout its length, and continued about fifty miles to the east to connect it with the automobile road to the east and thus make this area accessible from the Caribou Road, and eventually from the Pacific states and the east. This road up the Bella Coola Valley, which might appropriately be called Mackenzie highway, follows practically the route of the great explorer. In fact, the width of the valley would not allow it to depart more than a mile or so from his route down the valley. Motorboats and Norwegian fishing boats make the great explorer's sea route easily accessible to visitors."

Whether or not this suggestion be acted upon, the idea is highly commendable. There are several national parks already in existence whose chief claim to recognition as such lies in scenic attractions mainly. The one proposed by Mr Smith possesses remarkable scenic allurements that greatly surpass those of Jasper and other parks in the Rocky Mountains, and has besides the more important claim of being the scene of a most momentous event in the history of Canada.[1]

It is a pity that the youth of Canada is not better supplied with information respecting the men concerned in the exploration and development of the country in which they live. The writer has before him a high school history of England and Canada, authorised by the Education Department of Ontario, in which the Hudson's Bay Company is disposed of in one brief paragraph; in which there is no mention made whatever of the North-West Company; in which neither Verendrye, nor Hearne, nor Mackenzie, nor Fraser, nor David Thompson, nor Cook, nor Vancouver, nor Campbell, nor Dease, nor Simpson, are even mentioned. This book was commonly used in other provinces besides Ontario, and if it be a fair sample of the material purporting to convey historic pabulum to the youthful mind, surely some steps should be taken by the Education Departments of the several Provinces to provide a more suitable class of text-book. All those whose names are just written deserve better at the hands of posterity than to be passed over in silence.

The greatest men have their seasons of prosperity, of wane and decline, but in the contemplation of their lives there is that which tends to the upbuilding of a sound intelligence, a broad understanding. "'Tis opportune to look back upon old times, and contemplate our

[1] The British Columbia Government has set aside thirteen acres of land on Dean Channel to be known as the "Sir Alexander Mackenzie Historic Park," which will be controlled by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. It is within this area that the Memorial on Mackenzie's Rock is situated.

forefathers," said Sir Thomas Browne in the epistle dedicatory to the 'Hydriotaphia.' Another old writer says (Ecclesiasticus xliv. 1-10): "Let us now praise famous men . . . men renowned for their power, giving counsel by their understanding. . . . There be of them, that have left a name behind them, that their praises might be reported. And some there be, which have no memorial, who are perished, as though they had never been." Almost in this category falls Alexander Mackenzie, discoverer, and how better can this record of the man and his deeds be brought to a close than by quoting the words of the great elegist :—

> "No farther seek his merits to disclose,
> Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
> There they alike in trembling hope repose,
> The Bosom of his Father and his God."



NOTES.

NOTE A.

In a memorial addressed to Governor Haldimand, dated October 4th, 1784, the North-West Company, through its directors, Benjamin and Joseph Frobisher, asked for certain privileges, and outlined a plan for the exploration of the country lying between Hudson's Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Accompanying the memorial they sent a letter, which contains details of the attempt to establish the fur trade under British rule in Canada not contained in Mackenzie's introduction to his 'Voyages.' On the 18th of the following April, Peter Pond sent a memorial to Lieutenant-Governor-General Hamilton supporting the memorial of the North-West Company. With the memorial he sent his famous map. In the interval between October 1784 and April 1785 General Haldimand retired from the office of Governor, General Hamilton taking his place as Lieutenant-Governor.

General Haldimand replied to the Frobishers through his secretary, R. Matthews, stating that he did not feel himself authorised to grant their requests, but promised to forward the memorial to London. In June 1785 the memorials and Pond's map were sent by Hamilton to Lord Sydney, the covering letter being couched in these terms :—

"QUEBEC, *6th June* 1785.

"MY LORD,—I have the honour to enclose the copy of a memorial to His Excellency, General Haldimand, presented to him by the merchants trading to the North-West, also their memorial to myself soliciting an exclusive Trade for a limited time. If it may be allowed me to suggest what occurs to me

on this business, however monopolies may be in general prejudicial to commerce, I must think that were the Indian Trade suddenly laid open to greedy and needy adventurers, the returns might be very great for a short period; but the Indians would be drowned in rum, and, exclusive of that consideration, it would be the occasion of endless quarrels, and bloodshed must be the consequences.

"The pretensions of the first discoverers will have their just weight with your Lordship; I shall therefore decline saying anything upon that head.

"The enclosed plan No. 1 shows the communication from Lake Ontario to Lake Huron by Lake la Clie. No. 2 shows Mr Pond's discoveries laid down in the best manner a short time would permit.

"All of which shall be pursued upon the signification of your Lordship's approbation, or abandoned in consequence of the orders I may hope to receive, all of which is submitted to the judgment of your Lordship with all possible deference and respect.

"I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your ever obedient and most humble servant,

HENRY HAMILTON.

"Benjamin Frobisher's remarks on the proposed communication accompany this.

"The Right Honourable Lord Sydney."

"MEMORIAL OF THE NORTH-WEST COMPANY.

"To His Excellency Frederick Haldimand, Captn. General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Province of Quebec and the Territories thereon depending, Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

"The memorial of the North-West Company humbly sheweth:

"That the Company from the Boundary described in the

late treaty of Peace being apprehensive, the United States would avail themselves of every means to dispossess them of their Trade to the North-West, from being entitled to an equal, if not an exclusive, right to the Grand Portage on Lake Superior and the water communication to the extent of Lake du Bois: Have at their own Expense and with the approbation of your Excellency, sent off from the North side of Lake Superior in the month of June last, Two persons on whom they can depend, accompanied by six Canadians, to attempt the discovery of another passage, North of the line of Boundary, to the River Ouinipique, and from the information your Memorialists have since received from them, they have every reason to expect that this passage, so much to be wished for, will be discovered and found practicable, which will effectually secure that valuable branch of the Furr trade to this Province.

"That, exclusive of this great Object, your Memorialists have in view another discovery of greater magnitude, which is that of exploring at their own Expense, between the latitudes of 55 and 65, all that tract of country extending west of the Hudson's Bay to the North Pacific Ocean, of which surveys shall be taken as far as it may be practicable, and such surveys with remarks thereupon respecting the nature of the Country, and the Rivers which discharge their waters into that sea between those latitudes, together with every other information that can be collected from the natives, shall be laid before the King's Governor for this Province, to be by him transmitted to his Majesty.

"That the Company's Servants, as before mentioned, are now actually employed in the first of these discoveries; And the latter, which must be considered as an object deserving of every Encouragement from Government, they are ready to undertake by such of their Servants, and other Persons who are qualified to carry their intentions into execution.

"That your Memorialists request your Excellency will be pleased to represent to his Majesty's Ministers the value and importance of these discoveries; and the propriety of granting to the Company an exclusive right to the passage they may discover from the North side of Lake Superior to the River Ouinipique; and also of the Trade to the North-West either

by that passage or by the present communication of the Grand Portage for Ten Years only, as a reward for their services and in consideration of their making these extensive and valuable Discoveries, at their own expense.

"Your Memorialists would not presume to ask for this exclusive Right of Trade to the North-West, if it could prove injurious to Individuals, or hurtful to this Province in general; but, on the contrary, they are the only persons who have any Interest of connection in that Country; consequently no one can be injured by it; while it will give them the opportunity of making the discoveries they propose, and pursuing the most proper measures suggested by long experience to supply the natives abundantly with every necessity they require, by which only, and a well-regulated system in that long chain of connections, the North-West Business is capable of being extended.

"Your Memorialists therefore request that until his Majesty's pleasure is known, that your Excellency will be pleased to suspend the granting of passes for the Grand Portage, or the passage they are attempting to discover from the North side of Lake Superior to the River Ouinipique, should they be applied for; And that you will be pleased to signify the same to the Officer commanding at Michilimakinak, to the end that no person may have cause to complain under a pretence of having property in the Country, if the Company should obtain for the Considerations now laid before your Excellency an exclusive right to the Trade from Lake Superior to the North-West.

"Your Memorialists pray your Excellency will take the merit of their Memorial into your consideration, and that you will be pleased to recommend to his Majesty's Ministers to grant to the North-West Company (of which your Memorialists are the Directors) an exclusive privilege of Trade from Lake Superior to that Country for Ten Years only, as a reward for discovering a new passage to the River Ouinipique, and thereby effectually secure to this Province the Furr Trade to the North-West. And in consideration also of exploring at their own expense between the latitudes of 55 and 65 all that Tract of Country West of Hudson's Bay to the North Pacific Ocean, and communicating to the Government such

Surveys and other information respecting that Country as it may be in their power to obtain.

"And your Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray, &c., &c.,

BENJ. & JOS. FROBISHER,
Directors of the North-West Company.

"MONTREAL, *4th October* 1784."

COVERING LETTER FROM THE MEMORIALISTS TO GENERAL HALDIMAND.

"MONTREAL, *4th October* 1784.

"SIR,—We beg to lay before your Excellency for your Consideration the enclosed Memorial on the subject of the trade to the North-West, to which we request your Excellency will permit us to add a few remarks respecting the rise and progress of that Business at different periods, since the Conquest of this Country, and state to your Excellency the nature and extent of it, and the Advantages which will Arise, not only to the Proprietors, but to this Province in general, from a well-regulated System in conducting it.

"The first adventurer went from Michilimakinak in the year 1765. The Indians of Lake La Pluye having then been long destitute of Goods, stop't and plundered his Canoes, and would not suffer him to proceed further. He attempted it again the year following, and met with the same bad Fortune. Another attempt was made in the year 1767. They left Goods at Lake Pluye to be traded with the Natives, who permitted them to proceed with the remainder; and the Canoes penetrated beyond Lake Ouinipique.

"From this period the Trade of that Country was attempted by other Adventurers with various success, and we were among the number in the year 1769 when we formed a connection with Messrs Todd & M'Gill of Montreal for the purpose of carrying on the Business, but the Indians of Lake La Pluye, still ungovernable and rapacious, plundered our

Canoes, and would not suffer any part of our Goods to be sent further. Before we could be acquainted with this misfortune, our Goods for the year following were at the Grand Portage, and we were then too far engaged to hesitate for a moment. A second attempt was made, in which we were more successful. Our canoes reached Lake Bourbon, and thenceforward we were determined to persevere. Taught, however, by experience that separate Interests were the Bane of that Trade we lost no time to form with those Gentlemen, and some others, a Company, and having men of Conduct and Abilities to conduct it in the Interior Country, the Indians were soon abundantly supplied, and being at the same time well treated, New Posts were discovered as early as the year 1774, which to the French were totally unknown; and had we not been interrupted by new adventure, the public in the course of a few more years would have been well acquainted with the value and extent of that Country, of which even at this time our knowledge is very imperfect. These adventurers consulting their own Interest only, without the least regard to the management of the Natives and the general welfare of the Trade, soon occasioned such disorder, that e who had the most substantial prospects lost no time to withdraw their property, since which this Business, tho' not altogether neglected, has been carried on under great disadvantages occasioned by a variety of Interests, sometimes partially and at other times wholly unconnected with each other; insomuch that at the latter end of the year 1782 those who had persevered were no more than Twelve in number, and being convinced by long experience of the advantages that would arise from a general Connection, not only calculated to secure and promote their mutual Interests, but also to guard against any encroachments of the United States on the line of Boundary, as ceded to them by treaty from Lake Superior to Lake du Bois—They entered upon and concluded Articles of Agreement, under the title of the North-West Company, of which we were named the Directors, dividing it into sixteen shares, of which each proprietor holds a certain number proportionate to the Interest he then had in the Country. And to prove to the world that they have no Views but what are directed to extend that Business

and promote the Commercial Interest of the Province, it is expressly ordered in the Thirty-second Article that their Agreement for the purpose of carrying on a Trade to the North-West shall be registered at the Secretaries' Office for this Province of Quebec for the Inspection of the public.

"Their first object was to prepare the necessary supplies and provide against any interruption to their business from the United States, by discovering another passage from Lake Superior to the River Ouinipique, at least 40 Leagues distant from the American line, at the Lake of the Woods, to secure at all events a Communication with the North-West. Having every reason to expect from the line to be drawn as explained in the late treaty of Peace, that they would soon be dispossessed of the Grand Portage, situated at the North-West extremity of Lake Superior, which is the only part of that Country where there is a possibility of getting to the Water Communication which leads to Lake du Bois, and thenceforward to every part of the Country beyond it; from which your Excellency will perceive the Grand Portage is the Key to that part of British America; and should the United States be put in possession before another passage is discovered, that valuable Branch of the Fur Trade must be forever lost to this Province. Urged by these reasons the Company lost no time in procuring the best information of the Country; and early in June last they actually sent off from the North side of Lake Superior a Canoe with Provisions only, navigated by six Canadians under the direction of Mr Edward Umfreville, who has been Eleven Years in the Service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Mr Venance St Germain; both of them men who speak the Language of the Natives, and who are in other respects very well qualified to execute the Company's intentions.

"Their Instructions were to proceed to Lake Alempigon, and thence in a West direction by the best Road for the Transportation of Goods in Canoes to the River Ouinipique, at or as near as may be to the Portage de L'Isle, and by Letters received from them at Lake Alempigon, 30th June, it appears they had met with innumerable difficulties from the want of Indian Guides, but they then had one who had undertaken to conduct them to Lake Eturgeon, and they expressed the

most sanguine hopes of getting forward from thence to the River Ouinipique. The Company have no accounts of them since that period, and as all their Canoes are now returned from the Grand Portage, they cannot until next year give your Excellency any further information concerning this discovery.

"The Inland Navigation from Montreal, by which the North-West business is carried on, is perhaps the most extensive of any in the known World, but is only practicable for Canoes on account of the great number of Carrying places. To give your Excellency some Idea of which there are upwards of ninety from Montreal to Lake du Bois only, and many of them very long ones.

"Two setts of men are employed in this business, making together upwards of 500; one-half of which are occupied in the transport of Goods from Montreal to the Grand Portage, in Canoes of about Four Tons Burthen, Navigated by 8 to 10 men, and the other half are employed to take such goods forward to every Post in the interior Country to the extent of 1000 to 2000 miles and upwards, from Lake Superior, in Canoes of about one and a half Ton Burthen, made expressly for the inland service, and navigated by 4 to 5 men only, according to the places of their destination.

"The Canoes from Montreal always set off early in May, and as the Provisions they take with them are consumed by the time they reach Michilimakinak, they are necessitated to call there merely to take an additional Supply, not only for themselves but also for the use of the Canoes intended for the Interior Country, and the Consumption of their servants at the Grand Portage, but as these Canoes are not capable of carrying the whole of such Provisions it thence becomes necessary to have a Vessel or Boats upon Lake Superior for that Transport only, and the utmost dispatch is required that everything may be ready in point of time to send off their supplies for the Interior Country, for which purpose the Goods, Provisions, and everything else required for the Outfits of the year must be at the Grand Portage early in July: for the carrying place being at least Ten miles in length, Fifteen days are commonly spent in this Service, which is performed by the Canoe-men, who usually leave the

west end from the 15th July to the 1st August, according to the distance of the places they are intended for.

"Their general loading is two-thirds Goods and one-third Provisions, which not being sufficient for their subsistence until they reach winter Quarters, they must and always do depend on the Natives they occasionally meet on the Road for an Additional Supply; and when this fails, which is sometimes the case, they are exposed to every misery that it is possible to survive, and equally so in returning from the Interior Country, as in Spring provisions are generally more Scanty. In winter Quarters, however, they are at ease, and commonly in plenty, which only can reconcile them to that manner of life, and make men forget their Sufferings in their Annual Voyage to and from the Grand Portage.

"We have taken the liberty to mention these matters so minutely to your Excellency to demonstrate how precarious that business is, and to show the impossibility of carrying it on to any extent in opposite Interests, without manifest ruin to some of the parties concerned and the destruction of the Trade. While, on the contrary, by a well-regulated System in that long and precarious chain of connections which a Company alone can establish and execute, every Advantage may be derived for discovery and improvement.

"The present Company have accordingly adopted the most proper measures to answer those ends, and have entered upon the Business with a determined Spirit to supply the Natives plentifully with every necessary they require, which is the only sure means to extend it and to obtain a perfect knowledge of the Country, so far as it may be done without interfering with the Commercial rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, which on all occasions they will carefully avoid.

"The property the Company have already in that Country, exclusive of their Houses and Stores and the different Posts, as appears by the settlement of their Accounts this present year, Amounts to the sum of £25,303, 3s. 6d. Currency, and their Outfits for the next Spring, which will be sent from Montreal as soon as the Navigation is open, will not fall much short of that sum, so that the Company will have an Interest at the Grand Portage in July next of about £50,000, original

Cost, in Furrs, to be sent to Montreal by the return of their Canoes, and in goods for the Interior Country, from which your Excellency may judge of what may be expected from that Trade, when in our power by an exclusive Right for Ten Years to explore the Country and extend it.

"We beg your Excellency's pardon for troubling you with this long detail; we have done it merely to give your Excellency the best information respecting a Trade which is hardly known, and still less understood, except by those who have been in that Country, requesting your Excellency will take this letter in support of their Memorial into your consideration, and extend to the Company your Favour and Protection to obtain for them An Exclusive Right to the Trade of the North-West, on the Conditions stated in the Prayer of their said Memorial to Your Excellency.

"We have the Honour to be, with the utmost respect in behalf of the North-West Company,

"Your Excellency's Most obedt. and Most hbl. servts,

BENJN. & JOS. FROBISHER

To His Excellency
General Haldimand,
Quebec.

NOTE B.

In a letter, quoted at greater length elsewhere, written by Judge Isaac Ogden of Quebec to his father, David Ogden, then in London, under date November 7th, 1789, occurs this paragraph :—

"Another man by the name of M'Kenzie was left by Pond at Slave Lake with orders to go down the River, and from thence to Unalaska, and so to Kamskatsha, and thence to England through Russia, &c. If he meets with no accident you may have him with you next year."

This statement is without other foundation than the word of Peter Pond, one of his ingenious but unreliable inventions. So far from being ordered to make such a journey, the evidence all points the other way, and that his colleagues regarded his explorations as so much time wasted.—M. S. W.

Note C.

To further illustrate the ignorance of the geography of the north-west coast prevalent in Mackenzie's time, the following extracts are from a letter written by Isaac Ogden, at that time acting clerk of the Crown, and afterwards a Judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court at Quebec, to his father, David Ogden, then residing in London, and who had been a judge at Newark, New Jersey, prior to the War of Independence. The date of the letter is November 7th, 1789, two months after Mackenzie's return to Fort Chipewyan from his journey to the Arctic :—

"In my last Letter I gave you some account of the extent of the Commerce and of this Country, and as I am convinced that common Report of estimation of Distance, &c., will not be satisfactory to a Philosophic mind, and as I have had an opportunity of seeing a map or chart of that Country made by a Gentleman of observation and Science, who has actually traversed it and made his map in it, and with whom I have this week had several Conversations, with the map before me, I am able to give you all the satisfaction you wish for, exclusive of the map itself, which I could not get a copy of, but I hope to send it to you the next Summer." (The "Gentleman" here referred to was none other than Peter Pond, of whom mention has already been made at some length.)

"From out of Great Slave Lake runs a very large River, which runs almost South-West, and has the largest Falls on it in the known World; it is at least two miles wide where the Falls are, and an amazing Body of Water. This River leaves the Lake in Lat. 64° and Long. 135°, and the Falls are in Long. 141°.

"The great chain of Mountains that extend from Mexico along the Eastern or Pacific Ocean, and the Northern Pacific Ocean, terminates in Lat. 62½° and Longitude 136°, so that the Slave River runs to the Westward of them, and emptys into the Ocean by its course in about Lat. 59°.

"There is no wood to the Northward of Slave Lake, and there is only a little low Brush which is filled with a species

of Buffaloes which have no Tails, but have long Hair on the Back of their Thighs and Legs that resemble a Tail. They are smaller than the common Buffaloes.

"When you have proceeded thus far, and have looked over your map, you will readily conjecture what River the above Slave Lake River is known by, when it empties into the Ocean. To save you much Trouble I will tell you it is Cook's River, which he penetrated upwards of 70 Leagues North-Eastwd., as you will see by his chart. Cook's River, as he laid it down in his chart (that is the Mouth of it), lays in Lat. 59°-40′ and Long. West 154°.

"His calculation and laying it down was East Longitude, but if you deduct his Eastern Long. from 360 you will find it to be 154 West. His course up the River was North-Easterly, the course of the River out of Slave Lake was South-Westerly.

"He traversed his River that course near 70 leagues North-Easterly, the River out of Slave Lake is known as far South-Westerly, therefore the distance to form the Junction or to ascertain the River to be the same is very short. The Mouth of Slave River at the Lake is in Lat. 64° and Long. 134°. The mouth of Cook's River is in Lat. 59°-40′ and Long. 154°. The Course is North-Easterly and South-Westerly. The Degrees of Long. in that Lat. are but little more than 26 miles upon the Average to a Degree, and the Difference of the Lat. only about 4 Degrees. Hence, as there is no other known Vent for the River setting out of Slave Lake, nor any other River in that Country to the Northward or Southward of Slave Lake to form such a River as Cook's River, there can be no doubt but the Source of Cook's River is now fully discovered and known. There are other proofs that are incontestable—Cook found a great quantity of drift-wood on the Coast. This wood is only found on the Banks of the River that emptys into Slave Lake. Neither are there any Rivers of any size from the near Approach of the Mountains to the Sea to the Eastward of the Lake. The Rivers of Arabaska (Athabasca—Ed.), Slave, and Mountain which empty into Slave Lake, are annually twice overflown—in the month of May by the breaking-up of the Ice, and in the month of August by the Melting of Snow on the Mountains. Hence, then, is accounted for the quantity of drift-wood which Capt. Cook met with, and these could only be launched into the

Ocean from Cook's River—for as I have already observed, there can be no extensive River to the Southward of Cook's River, or the River that empties out of Slave Lake, as the great Chain of Mountains approach to the verge of Slave Lake and River.

"Another Proof is that the Gentleman (from whose Chart and from whom I collected the above Information) met with two Indians, who came, as they said, up a River from the Northern Pacific Ocean all the way to Slave Lake.

"They brought him in 1787 a Blanket which they received from Vessels which were at the Mouth of the River; they say that the River he was in is large to the place of Discharge and Navigable, so that if we take the Latitude and Longitude of the two Rivers, the Courses, and all the other circumstances into consideration, little doubt remains that they are the same. . . .

"The Inferences that I shall now draw are . . . That the Great Slave Lake is the most Northerly large piece of water before you arrive at the Northern Ocean, and the River that rises from the Lake empties into the Northern Pacific Ocean, and is the River that Cook discovered. That an easy communication with and an advantageous commerce may be carried on by posts established on Lakes Slave, Arabaska, Pelican, &c., &c., and to deliver the Fruits of their commerce at the Mouth of Cook's River, to be then carried to China, &c., and that as Cook's River and the Lands on Slave Lake, Arabaska, &c., are very fine, some advantageous settlements may be made there which may be beneficial to the Government.

"The Country about Arabaska is exceedingly fine, and the Climate more moderate than it is here, which is owing to its Propinquity to the Western Ocean. The distance is not more than 200 Leagues, if so much, on a West South-Western Course. We have a Post there, as we have on the different Lakes from Lake Superior to the upper end of Slave Lake; the number of Posts is 21 in that distance where Traders are posted to trade with the different Tribes of Indians.

"The distance from this Town to the Head of Lake Superior is 750 Leagues, and from the Head of Lake Superior to the Great Slave Lake is one thousand Leagues; in the whole, 1750 Leagues.

"The person from whom I had my Information is Peter Pond, who was supplied with the proper Instruments here to

take his Latitude, and instructed fully in the knowledge of Astronomy, &c., &c. His Latitude is undoubtedly Right, and his Longitude is near Right. It was taken by some Persons sent from York River seven hundred miles to the westward of it, and from thence by the Courses of the Rivers and Lakes, no great mistake can be made.

"Another man by the name of M'Kenzie was left by Pond at Slave Lake with orders to go down the River, and from thence to Unalaska, and so to Kamskatsha, and thence to England through Russia, &c. If he meets with no accident, you may have him with you next year."

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Peter Pond's "Information" was even less reliable than his map. The distances given by Ogden are grossly exaggerated, being based on Pond's longitudes, which were ludicrously incorrect. He placed Lake Athabasca too far west, thus creating the impression that the distance from that lake to the Western Ocean at the mouth of the so-called Cook's River was much shorter than it is in reality.

Isaac Ogden's letter was considered a valuable contribution to the knowledge of the geography of the far west, and his father, David Ogden, sent the above extract from it to the Government. His letter transmitting the document was addressed to Sir Evan Nepean, and is as follows:—

"Sir,—Having received from my son, Isaac Ogden of Quebec, a letter, dated 7th Novem. 1789, giving an account of a Mr Pond's having explored the interior parts of North America, I have the honour to inclose you an extract of said Letter, as the same may afford some advantageous Information to Government, which, if you think proper, you will lay before Mr Grenville.[1]

I have the Honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedt. and very humble serv.,
David Ogden.

"Rathbone Place, No. 50,
January 23d. '90."

[1] The Right Hon. W. W. Grenville, born 1759, was Postmaster-General in 1783. In 1789 he was Speaker of the House of Commons,

NOTE D.

Among the number of persons interested in geographical discovery in the latter part of the eighteenth century was Alexander Dalrymple. He was hydrographer to the East India Company, in whose service he had been engaged as a writer when a youth. He was probably at India House when Charles Lamb made his advent there in 1792. In 1795 he was appointed hydrographer to the Admiralty.

In a Memorandum which he prepared, dated February 2nd, 1790, he shows a very considerable knowledge of the explorations of the north-west coast by Cook, Portlock and Dixon, Meares, Barkley, and of the voyage of Captain Middleton to Hudson's Bay, and of Danish explorations and of Hearne's travels. He advanced arguments in favour of further exploration for the discovery of the North-West Passage, and, having dealt with that subject, he continues thus :—

" But even supposing for a moment, what is not supported by any probable inference, that the navigation westward by the North of Hudson's Bay is impracticable, then we are to consider the matter as confined to an Examination by Land.

" The Canadian Traders (The North-West Company—Ed.) represent the distance from Quebec to the extremity of Lake Superior to be 750 Leagues, or 2250 Geographical miles, and from thence to the Great Slave Lake 1000 Leagues, or 3000 more ; in the whole, 1750 Leagues or 5250 Geographical miles." (It is apparent that these figures were obtained from Isaac Ogden's letter to his father, David Ogden—*vide ut supra*, —and which the latter had turned over to the Government on January 23rd, 1790, ten days before the date of Dalrymple's Memorandum.) " Altho' this distance be admitted to be greatly exaggerated, still the estimation operates equally in favour of Hudson's Bay when compared with the distance from thence.

" I will suppose the distance in a direct Line may be admitted

and in the same year was made Home Secretary. In 1790 he was created Baron Grenville, and from 1791 to 1801 was Foreign Secretary, under Pitt. He died in 1834.

in miles instead of Leagues, because I would give the fairest computation; this gives 1750 miles, thro' a country full of falls and rapids to impede the navigation.

"We shall take it, however, only to the Island in the Arathapescow (Athabaska—Ed.) Lake at 1350 Geographic miles.

"This distance from Hudson's Bay is only 600 miles, of which above 200 is the *Chesterfield Inlet known* to be navigable. The Canadian Trader represents the *Arathapescow* Lake to extend 100° to the Eastward of the Island, Mr Hearne 90°; and a very considerable portion of the remaining 300 miles is occupied by the *Dobaunt* and other Lakes.

"By Hudson's Bay the Discoverers would profit by the information of Mr Turnor, whom the Hudson's Bay Company have sent into those parts, and from whose Astronomical abilities we may reasonably expect competent Information, whereas Peter Pond's allegation (as reported by Mr Rolland) 'that the *Observations* of the Latitude in his *last Journey* agreed to a *second* with the positions in his *former* map' laid down by the Estimation, betrays his *ignorance* or impudence and invalidates any Reports coming from him.

"Supposing some person of knowledge and veracity to be sent with him, it is probable that Pond would *hide* that Person, as is at present alledged of a person whose merits raised his Jealousy. (This possibly refers to the murder of Wadin, *quod vide supra.*)

"It is also to be considered that Pond is a native of the United States, and cannot therefore be deemed to be attached to this country. He also pretends to the Sovereignty of the Lands adjacent to the Arathapescow Lake, so that by encouraging him we may be fostering a viper in our bosom."

Dalrymple concludes his Memorandum by suggesting two ships be sent—one round the Horn to the north-west coast, and the other to Hudson's Bay—to try to find a communication by sea, or to induce Esquimaux to "accompany some of our People across those Lakes & by those Rivers which the Indian Maps represent as connecting Hudson's Bay & the Arathapescow Lake, which would obviate the objection

made to the navigation from the Northern Parts of Hudson's Bay as being a country destitute of Birch-wood for making *Bark Canoes*.

"I cannot omit mentioning the propriety of having *Dogs* as a *watch*; for the Indians coming upon their enemies like a Tiger by stealth, The Alarm would be given, and their Brutal Ferocity prevented."

Writing to Sir Evan Nepean on February 11th of that same year, Mr Dalrymple, whose address at that time was No. 52 High Street, Marylebone, urges the Government to take action. His letter reads :—

"Dr Sir,—My Friend Mr Wegg, the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, desires me to say that the Directors of that Company have unanimously determined to send their Sloop of about 90 Tons at the Company's Expence, if Government will send a proper Person in her to examine if any outlet can be found from Hudson's Bay to facilitate the communication with the West Coast. They are particularly solicitous that the Government would send a proper Person in her that the Publick may be assured of everything being done to effect the desired purpose.

"They also wish that two proper Persons may be sent by the Government to travel inland to ascertain the shortest communication by the Lakes and Rivers, and The Hudson's Bay Company will defray any reasonable Expence of that undertaking.

"Dr Sir,

Very truly yrs.,

A. Dalrymple."

Afterwards follows a note by the same writer, undated :—

"Dr Sir,—I find you were mistaken concerning D. He is a Cumberland man, and not an American. I thought I recollected Stockdale had so informed me. I therefore enquired of him, and find they come from the same part of that Country.

"I should think Capt. F. D. would do well for the Land

Expedition to Hudson's Bay, and H. and his Brother from Canada, if that Plan is still followed. I mentioned Johnstone to Wegg in the manner we agreed, and shall write to-day."

The "D" here referred to is Captain Douglas. "H" is Captain Holland, son of Major Samuel Holland, for many years Surveyor-General in Canada. He had travelled at least as far as Lake Superior, and appears to have been willing to undertake the part it was suggested he should fill, for he prepared the following plan for carrying on the proposed explorations :—

"The following Plan strikes Mr Holland as most eligible for carrying into Effect the proposed Expedition for Discovering and Exploring the Interior parts of the Northern and Western Quarter of America : Lying between Lake Aurabusquie, or Arthepeskow, and the Line of Coast discovered by Capt. Cook :—

"First, that the Party to be employed should consist of not less than sixteen Persons, including a Surveyor and Assistant ; Four Men having some knowledge of Boat Building ; Eight Canadians and Two Indians for navigating Two or sometimes Three Canoes, in order at Times, or as occasion may require, to be enabled to Detach one on any separate work which may present itself, such as exploring Rivers, sketching in the side of a Lake opposite to that taken by the Main Party and Chief Surveyor, with whom Two Canoes must constantly be stationed for fear of accidents to either, and by keeping the Duplicates, Plans, Observations, Journals, &c., separated less injury would be sustained by the loss.

"One of the great Obstacles to impede such an Expedition would be the want of Provisions. It will therefore be necessary that a sufficient Quantity (for at least Three years' consumption) should be deposited at Aurabusquie, to be conveyed thither from the King's Stores at Michilimacinak, and as our Canoes, from the smallness of their size, would not be able to contain the Quantity requisite, a Party and Canoes might be spared from the Fort to aid in transporting of it to Aurabusquie, from whence our chief operations ought to commence.

"The Track from Lake Superior thither being known (and an accurate survey not the object in view), all that appears necessary between those places is the ascertaining Latitude and Longitude of some Principal Posts in our Route, and making such Sketches as may be useful to Persons who may follow. This, I presume, will be all that can be done in the course of the Ensuing Summer, supposing the Party to depart from Quebec about the end of May, at which Place, and at Montreal; a Month at least will be consumed in making the necessary Preparations Prior to our Departure. Little further during the winter season can be done at Aurabusquie than exploring the Surrounding Country, making Observations, gaining Intelligence, and preparing for pursuing our Route in Spring, which, I think, should be by mounting the Slave River, thence North-West coasting the Slave Lake (which by Information gained at Quebec from Persons who have been in that Country) is not less than Ten Degrees of Longitude; That it discharges itself into a River which takes its course N.-West, and that its Distance from thence, to Prince William's Sound or Cook's River, does not exceed Fifteen Degrees of Longitude.

"After reaching the mouth of Cook's River, or whatever other River we may fall in with on the outset, It will be advisable to stretch along the Coast to the South-East, to observe the course of all such rivers as may appear of importance, until we shall be joined by the Party intended to depart from Hudson's House, who I apprehend will follow the Coast to the North-West, and explore the rivers in like manner until our Junction."

On July 7th, same year, Dalrymple wrote to Sir Evan Nepean as follows:—

"Dr Sir,—I have not been able to get down to Whitehall since I had your note. My map is *not finished* because I *have not received* the *Latitudes*, &c., of Lake Superior you promised to ask of Mr Holland. I think everything else is prepared. If you wish to have a *Proof* of what is done—viz., the *West Coast* of *Hudson's Bay* without any of *Peter Pond's* or the Canadian Parts, I will bring it to-morrow as I shall

be your way. I suppose you have heard that Capt. Douglas is gone again from China to the N.-W. Coast of America under *American* colours."

Despite all these plans, letters, and memoranda, nothing was done. The season was too advanced by the time those interested had made up their minds what should be done, and Captain Holland, who was to have made the Land Exploration, wrote to Nepean as under :—

"LONDON, *July 25th*, 1790.

"SIR,—Presuming from the advanced state of the season, that little can be done this year towards prosecuting the intended exploration of the Interior parts of the North-West of America, than in making such arrangements at Quebec during the winter as will enable us to leave that place the Instant the Ice breaks up in Spring, to effect which I conceive it of material consequence to have the necessary Instruments and other articles to be procured in this Country shipped this season for Canada for the following reasons : That after Sunday next, the 1st of August, the direct communication by shipping to Quebec closes till next Spring, when, from numberless impediments, their arrival is frequently retarded till near the commencement of June, at which time we should be near Michilimacinak. Submitting the above with all deference to your superior judgement.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most devoted, most obedient, and most humble servant,

JN. F. DE B. HOLLAND."

Whether Sir Evan Nepean's [1] "superior judgement" led

[1] Sir Evan Nepean (1751-1822) was the second son of Nicholas Nepean of Saltash, Cornwall. He entered the navy as a clerk ; in 1776 was purser of the sloop *Falcon* and afterwards of the *Harpy*. In 1782 he was secretary to the port admiral at Plymouth ; appointed Under-Secretary of State under the Shelborne ministry ; commissioner of Privy Council, 1784 ; Under-Secretary for War, 1794 ; Secretary of Admiralty from 1795 to 1804. Created baronet in 1802. In 1804 for a few months was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and was then made one of the Lords Commissioners at Admiralty. From 1812 to 1819 he was governor of Bombay. He married Margaret, daughter of William Skinner, an army captain. Issue, four sons and one daughter.

to the despatch of the instruments or not does not appear. At any rate the proposed expeditions did not set out. The year 1791 was equally barren of results. In that year Alexander Mackenzie journeyed from Fort Chipewyan to Grand Portage, Montreal, and London. It was while on his way across the continent that he met Philip Turner who, according to Dalrymple (*vide* his Memorandum), had in February 1790 already set out on his journey to Athabasca. It should be noted that Mackenzie did with his nine men and one canoe what Captain Holland thought sixteen men, three canoes, and provisions for three years were necessary to accomplish.

NOTE E.

Edward Augustus, Duke of Kent and Strathern (1767-1820), fourth son of George III. and father of Queen Victoria, was sent to Quebec in 1791 with his regiment, the 7th Fusiliers, of which he had the command. He became very popular with all classes. He was Governor Simcoe's first distinguished guest at Navy Hall, Niagara. With the object of seeing Niagara Falls, he left Quebec on August 12th, 1792, and was met at Oswegatchi (Ogdensburg), on the St Lawrence below Kingston, by a specially prepared barge sent there by Simcoe, in charge of Peter Clark. The barge was rowed to Kingston, where the Duke embarked on the armed schooner *Onandaga*, which took him to Niagara, where he arrived 21st August, and was welcomed by a royal salute from the fort, and was escorted to Navy Hall as Simcoe's guest. On 23rd he visited the Falls. There was no settlement there then, and the shores were lined with unbroken forest. Upon his return from the Falls he dined at Robert Hamilton's, Queenstown. On 26th he left for Kingston on his return to Quebec. Kent House, above Montmorency Falls, eight miles distant from Quebec, remains as a memorial of his residence in that district. Sent to the West Indies in 1794, while travelling to Boston *viâ* Lake Champlain, then frozen over, the sleigh containing his personal effects broke through and disappeared for ever. At Boston he had arranged to proceed to Barbadoes in a "not very safe little schooner," when the arrival of the

Roebuck, of six guns, sent for the express purpose from Halifax, afforded him a safer and more expeditious mode of transportation. Fired at by French cruisers, the fast-sailing powers of the *Roebuck* ran the gauntlet in safety, the Duke reaching his destination in time to be present at the surrender of Fort Bourbon on March 23rd, 1794, and took possession of both gates. On May 10th of that year he reached Halifax, and took command of troops there. In 1796 he was promoted to rank of Lieut.-General. In 1798 he returned to England; Commander-in-Chief of forces in British North America, 1799 to 1800, when he returned to England; Governor of Gibraltar, 1802-3, and made Field-Marshal, 1805.

APPENDIX I.

LETTER FROM SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE TO JOHN SULLIVAN, UNDER-SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES.

"MONTREAL, *25th October* 1802.

"SIR,—My Lord Hobart having done me the honour at parting, to express a wish of hearing from me, on this side of the Atlantic, I take the liberty of addressing you, enclosing copies of two papers, which on the substance of which, I presume, will be transmitted through the Lieut. Governor, tho' not perhaps immediately, and which I beg leave to request, that you will please with this to lay before His Lordship. The papers will explain themselves, and, I am sorry to say, show that I have not succeeded; as also evince the improbability of my being able to succeed in bringing about the union between the two Fur Companies, which my Lord Hobart so strongly recommended to me as the first step towards the accomplishment of my favourite project; Without the aid of Government, by granting the Licences (I had the honour of proposing) to one of the contending parties, with the condition that the other party should have the option of sharing, in the proportion of the Trade they might be carrying on, to that part of His Majesty's Dominions, I see no means of bringing about a coalition for several years to come, making the Western Establishment lost perhaps for ever.

"I have conversed with General Hunter upon the subject, and, though averse to Monopolies of any kind, he agreed with me that no mode would answer to carry on that trade to advantage and to make proper Establishments but through

a Chartered Company. I had no promise from His Excellency that he would communicate this his opinion to His Majesty's Ministers.

"As so little probability exists of bringing about in a reasonable time a Voluntary Coalition of the two Fur Companies, may I be permitted to submit to His Lordship's consideration the expediency of securing at all events in a National point of view the means of hereafter giving efficiency to the favourite project alluded to, or any other which the Government may think eligible to countenance by forming an immediate Military Establishment upon the Western Coast of North America, so as to prevent other nations anticipating us in an object the importance of which cannot at present be foreseen in all its consequences.

"And further, I cannot too strongly entreat His Lordship's attention to the propriety and necessity of establishing as speedily as possible such a jurisdiction as shall prevent the contending Fur Companies from abusing any power which superiority of numbers or strength may accidentally confer, and which shall seem to each, the fruits of fair harvest and industrious exertion.

"A jurisdiction possessing such efficient Judicial Control, besides having the most beneficial effects in general, might also be a means of promoting a speedier Voluntary Coalition of the Companies by preventing a recurrence of those causes of increasing animosity which tend to keep them asunder.

"It will not escape His Lordship's penetration that in any Legislative interference upon the subject, it will be essential to avoid everything which could be construed to confer upon the Hudson's Bay Company a Parliamentary sanction in regard to their doubtful Charter, or which could give them the right of checking commercial enterprise from this quarter by the usual inland routes into any Territory which Traders from hence have been accustomed to occupy; although the same may nominally be included in the limits of the said Charter.

"I had the honour of remarking to my Lord Hobart that an attempt had been made by one of the partners of the old Fur Company to penetrate in a more Southern direction than I did to the River Columbia, in which he failed through ill-health. A second attempt has been made by another partner

of the same concern with no better success, owing to a mutiny of the men employed, arising as I judge from the want of an appropriate Talent for such an undertaking in the leader. I have been credibly informed that the Astronomer who went with both expeditions declares positively that the object is not impracticable.

"The communication to the Lieut. Governor through Mr Ryland is clearly and decidedly the sentiments of the principal people of the new company, of whom Mr Richardson is one and a most valuable, active, and respectable Magistrate of this City.

"I have the honour to be, with much respect, Your Devoted and faithful Humble servant,

ALEX. MACKENZIE."

(The enclosures were a letter from John Richardson, and the Presentment of the Grand Jury of Montreal.)

APPENDIX II.

NOTE TO PAGE 264.

"PRELIMINARIES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PERMANENT BRITISH FISHERY AND TRADE IN FURS, &C., ON THE CONTINENT AND WEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA.

ARTICLES.	OBSERVATIONS.
"1. To form a supreme Civil and Military Establishment, on the centrally situated and Navally defensible Island of Nootka, at King George's Sound, Lat. 50° North, with two subordinates: one in the River Columbia, Lat. 46° 1/2 and the other on *Sea Otter Harbour*, Lat. 55° North.	1. Priority of occupation vesting sovereignty in the possessor, no time to be lost. *Vide* Treaty with Spain of 1790.
"2. Either to repeal so much of the Acts of Parliament now in force as vest in the East India Company or South Sea Company, jointly or separately, an exclusive Right of Fishery Trade and Navigation in the Pacific Ocean and on the West Coast of North America; or "to obtain from both or either of those Companies a *Licence*, irrevocable and unlimited, there to Fish Trade and Navigate in-	2. On the ground that neither of these Companies have exercised this Fishery and Trade, and that the East India Company is under a legal obligation to Grant such a Licence, unless cause to the contrary, allowed to be good by the Board of Control, can be assigned. *Vide* Act of Par. 33 Geo. III., Ch. 52, sec. 78.

their or its Right and to establish Factors or Agents at Canton in China and any other Port, or place within the limits of their Charters, for the Direct sale and Barter of the Exports and Imports from and to the West Coast of North America, to and with the people of China and others, there residing or trading at the time; as fully and freely as both or either of these Companies might do, if they themselves carried on said Fishery Trade and Navigation—namely, during the yet unexpired term of their Charters; and those Charters not to be renewed, but either with the entire exception of the said Fishery Trade and Navigation, or under a legal obligation to continue the Licences now to be granted for the whole term of their duration.

On the ground that as the returns of this Trade are not realisable in less than three or four years, no body of men capable of carrying it on to the advantage of the Nation will embark in it, unless thus assured of its permanency.

"3. To obtain from the Hudson Bay Company, If it has legal power to grant or refuse it, a Licence of Transit, irrevocable and unlimited; for all Goods, Wares and Merchandise, the growth, produce, and Manufacture of Great Britain and of America, in and outwards, through all the Seas, Bays, Ports, Rivers, Lakes, and Territories, within the Limits of its Charter, in their passage *directly between Great Britain and North America*, without being subject to any visitation or Search nor to any duty or charge, to which those of the Company itself are not liable; the Consignee, say, the Resident agent at York and Churchill Factories, or Conductors of every transport delivering to the Governor, or other officer representing the

3. On the ground that the Right of transit between the Mother Country and her Colonies, through her own proper Territory and Colonies, is an Attitude of sovereignty, neither surrendered nor meant to have been surrendered to the Hudson Bay Company according to its Charter, the exercise of which is not deniable on any principle of Political Economy; while it is necessary, and would be highly beneficial, as being the shortest way to and from Countries without its limits for the purpose of facilitating the intercourse between Great Britain and these Countries, in the Exchange of the Manufactures of the former for the raw products of the Latter.

Company in chief, at the first Port or place of Entry into the limits or jurisdiction of the Company a Manifest of the Marks, Numbers, and Contents of the several packages, Chests, &c., upon oath to be administered to him by the said Governor or officer in chief, who, within twenty-four hours after such Manifest has been to him tendered, shall return the same to the said Consignee or Conductor, indorsed with his Visa and Signature, under the seal of the Company, to serve as a passport, producible at every but not questionable by any other station of the Company, commonly called Trading Houses, interiorly or exteriorly, by any Governor or other officer or servant of the Company within the limits of their jurisdiction.

"4. To grant these Licences to a Company of British Merchants, to be established in London under the name of "The Fishery & Fur Company," which Company, for the purpose of combining the Fishery in the Pacific with the Fur Trade of the Interior from the East to the West Coasts of the Continent of North America, would at once equip Whalers in England, and by means of the establishments already made and in activity, at Montreal in the East and advanced posts and Trading Houses in the Interior towards the West Coast to which they might be extended and where other establishments to be made at King George Sound, Nootka Island, under the protection of the supreme Government; and on the River

4. There are at present, *vide* Mackenzie's 'Voyages,' two Companies at Montreal engaged in the North American Fur Trade, both of which are chiefly composed of men, who, by personal exertions, no less hazardous than laborious and persevering, have contributed to the extension of it into formerly unknown parts; and who, if not the only men able to extend it to the Pacific, are at least the most likely to succeed as the best qualified to undertake it. These Companies have not heretofore had any idea of embarking in the Pacific Fishery, but if they should succeed in combining the Fur Trade of the East with that of the West, they would find it highly beneficial to combine the latter, if not both, with the Whale Fishery, and in so far as they may not be

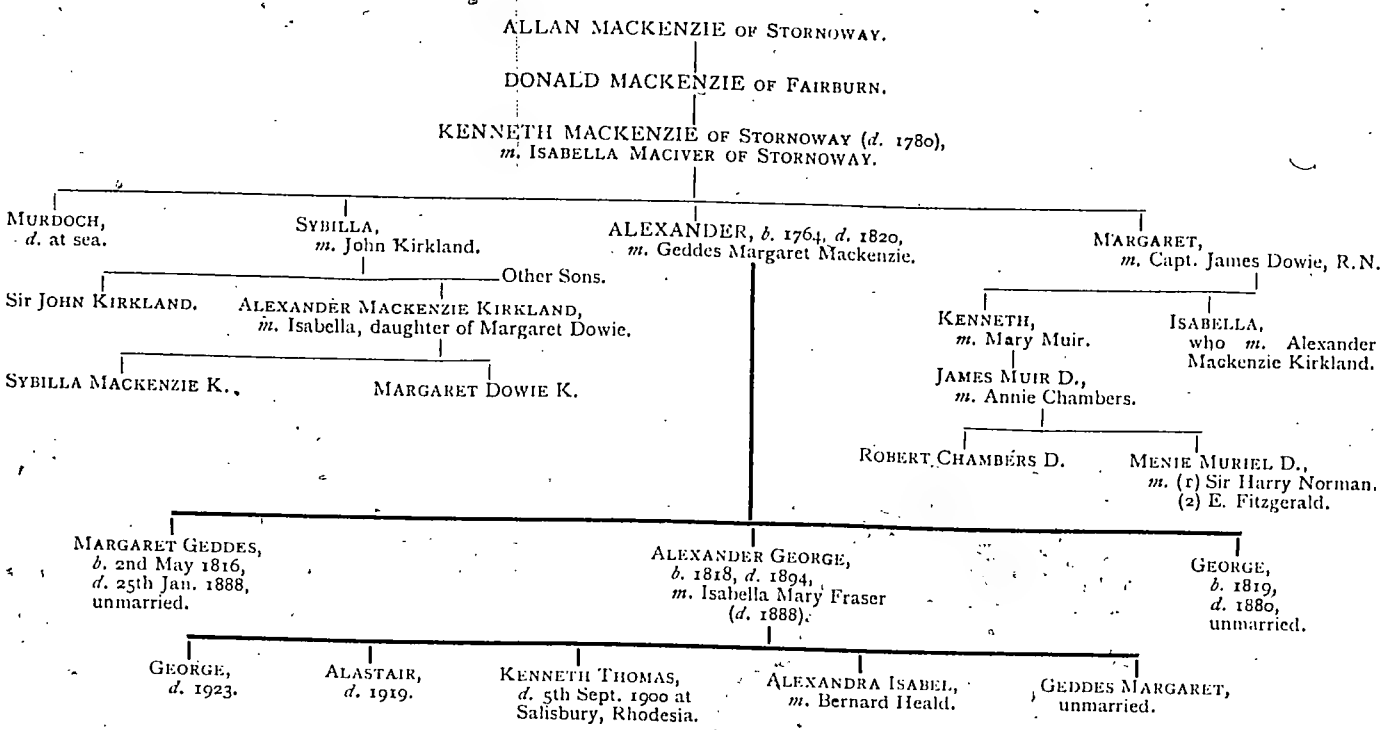
Columbia and at *Sea Otter Harbour*, under the protection of the subordinate Government of those places would open and Establish a Commercial Communication, through the Continent of North America, between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, to the incalculable advantage and furtherance both of the Pacific Fishery and American Fur Trade of Great Britain, in part directly and in part indirectly through the Channel of the possessions and Factories of the East Indian Company in China, &c., it being perfectly understood that none of these Maritime or inland Establishments shall be made on territory in the possession of any other European Nation, nor within the limits either of the United States of North America or of the Hudson's Bay Company.

LONDON, *7th January* 1802.
Alex. Mackenzie.

possessed of a Capital sufficient for carrying on both the Fishery and Fur Trade, they would be at no loss for Partners in London who would raise the deficiency.

The Whalers might carry out from England all the British articles Saleable or rather barterable for the furs and other Products of America, and bring back such part of the latter as would best suit the British Market; while other vessels of such a size and construction as may be found best adapted might be employed to carry the samples to Canton and such other Settlements of the East India Company as offer the best Market in the way either of Sale or Barter.

But as it is obvious that the two Companies already embarked in the Fur Trade from Montreal, including their several connections in London, must find their interest in coalescing, may that the great national object in view, in the first instance, if not wholly unattainable without, will at least be best attainable through, a voluntary connection and consolidation of the two Companies into one for such a number of years and on such other terms as they may agree upon; so is there not the least reason to doubt; That under such Licences—1st, of Fishing Trade and Navigation; and 2nd, of Transit—they would unite themselves, and succeed equally to their own proper and to the public advantage.


ALLAN MACKENZIE OF STORNOWAY.
DONALD MACKENZIE OF FAIRBURN.
KENNETH MACKENZIE OF STORNOWAY (d. 1780), m. ISABELLA MACIVER OF STORNOWAY.
MURDOCH, d. at sea.
SYBILLA, m. John Kirkland.
ALEXANDER, b. 1764, d. 1820, m. Geddes Margaret Mackenzie.
MARGARET, m. Capt. James Dowie, R.N.
Other Sons.
Sir JOHN KIRKLAND.
ALEXANDER MACKENZIE KIRKLAND, m. Isabella, daughter of Margaret Dowie.
SYBILLA MACKENZIE K.,
MARGARET DOWIE K.
KENNETH, m. Mary Muir.
ISABELLA, who m. Alexander Mackenzie Kirkland.
JAMES MUIR D., m. Annie Chambers.
ROBERT CHAMBERS D.
MENIE MURIEL D., m. (1) Sir Harry Norman, (2) E. Fitzgerald.
MARGARET GEDDES, b. 2nd May 1816, d. 25th Jan. 1888, unmarried.
ALEXANDER GEORGE, b. 1818, d. 1894, m. Isabella Mary Fraser (d. 1888).
GEORGE, b. 1819, d. 1880, unmarried.
GEORGE, d. 1923.
ALASTAIR, d. 1919.
KENNETH THOMAS, d. 5th Sept. 1900 at Salisbury, Rhodesia.
ALEXANDRA ISABEL, m. Bernard Heald.
GEDDES MARGARET, unmarried.



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INDEX.

Aisne, Louis, 242.
Alaska, 73.
Alexandria, 141, 153, 168, 223.
American ships, use of, 275.
Anah-yoo Tesse River, 183.
Anderson, John N., 21.
Anniau, Pierre L', 26.
Applecross, 248, 260.
Architecture, native, 193, 213.
Arctic Circle, 59, 60, 63.
Arctic Ocean, 17, 29, 49, 64, 65; tides, 68, 70, 73, 94, 96, 111, 130, 272.
Arctomys Monax, 187.
Arkansas River, 6.
Art, native, 194.
Assiniboine River, 238.
Astor, John Jacob, 244, 252, 275.
Astoria, 244, 275.
Astronomical observations, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 97, 98, 99, 112, 113, 116, 120, 127, 129, 132, 137, 138, 156, 159, 174, 176, 181, 191, 195, 204, 206, 207, 211, 217, 299, 300, 304.
Athabasca District, 9, 27, 96, 103, 237, 238.
Athabasca Fort, 28.
Athabasca, Lake, 8, 15, 29, 30, 33, 38, 85, 97, 100, 101, 108, 301, 304, 306.
Athabasca River, 28, 29, 93, 101, 300.
Atnah tribes, 167, 168.
Avoch, 246, 247, 249, 256, 257, 258, 261.
Ayr, 239.

Back, Sir George, 1.
Bad River, 130, 135, 224.
Barkley, Captain, 150, 303.
Barnard River, 124.
Barren Lands, the, 272.
Barrieau, Francois, 35.
Barron Trail, 223.
Barrow, Point, 68, 70.
Bear River, 116.
Beauchamp, Jacques, 111, 132.
Beaulieux, Francois, 111.
Beatton River, 116.
Beaver Club, 242.
Beaver Indians, 48, 91, 97, 101, 114, 125, 128, 237.
Beaver Lake, 28; River, 58.
Beechey's voyages, 82.
Behring Straits, 70, 272.
Bell, J., 270.
Bella Bella Indians, 201, 206, 209.
Bella Coola—
Indians, 150, 208; Trail, 179; River, 183, 187, 215, 222, 223, 285.
Bentinck Inlet (Arm), 72, 187, 196, 197, 198.
"Benzins," 199.
Bernadotte, King of Sweden, 277.
Bishop, Captain R. P., 188, 206, 207, 210, 211.
Bisson, Baptiste, 111.
Bitumen, 56, 121.
Black Bear Island Lake, 28.
Blackfeet, 6.
Black Isle, 246.
Black, Samuel, 270.
Blackwater River, 141, 162, 164, 166, 168, 172, 174, 175, 176, 178, 180, 182, 189, 196, 213, 222.
Blondeau, 242.
Boat songs, 37, 38, 227.
Book, Mackenzie's, 238, 264, 272, 276; Napoleon's copy, 257, 262.
Boston, 151.
"Boucans," the, 56, 86.
Bouremont, St Denis, 5.
Boyer, 34, 101, 103.
Brigade, the, 24.
British Columbia, 269, 281.
British Government, negligence of, 264, 267, 268.
British navigators, 3; shipping, 275.
British North America, boundaries of, 271.
Broughton, Lieutenant, 196, 224.
Buffalo, 300.

Buffalo Head, 123.
Buffalo Lake, 28.
Burke Canal (Channel), 197, 199, 202.
Burnt Bridge Creek, 188.
Burrard Inlet, 199.
Butler, Captain, 112, 123.
Button, Captain, 3.

Cabots, the, 1.
Cadot, 9.
Campbell, R., 1. 270.
Campeau, 242.
Canadian Geological Surveys, 182, 188.
Canal, Lachine, 268, 269.
Canoe Island, 159, 161.
Canoe men, 191.
Canoes, 12, 35, 55, 111, 131, 133, 141, 159, 169, 190, 195, 201, 217, 218, 221, 267, 293, 296, 305, 306.
Canton, 11, 266, 274, 275, 317.
Cape Mackay, 210.
Carbon River, 123.
Carcajour River, 56.
Cariboo gold-fields, 223; road, 285.
Carleton Island, 20.
Carrier Indians, 167, 168, 177, 213.
Cartier, J., 1.
Carver, Jonathan, 151.
Cascade Inlet, 200, 204, 210.
Cedar Lake, 7, 28.
Chaboillez, Charles Jean, 242, 251.
Chambers, Robert, 261; Annie, 261.
Charlevoix, 2.
Charts, 211.
Chatham, H.M.S., the, 196.
Chaudière River, 25.
Chilathlumdinky Mountain, 187.
Chilcotin River, 223; Indians, 168.
China, 11, 12, 315.
Chinook wind, 106.
Chipewyan. *Vide* Forts.
Chootanli Lake, 166.
Christmas, 106.
Churchill River, 4, 8, 9, 28.
Chutes, the, 101.
Clark, John, 234.
Claytonia Sessifolia, 187.
Clearwater Lake, 101; River, 28, 124.
Clus-cus Creek, 176, 177.
Coal, 56, 85, 86, 272.
Coalition of companies, 240, 264, 265, 266, 272, 273, 276, 311.
Coast Indians, 173, 183, 184, 213.
Columbia River, 55, 95, 149, 151, 224, 244, 266, 267, 274, 275, 281, 317.
Columbus, 1.
Cook, Captain James, 32, 95, 97, 195, 196, 300, 303.
Cook's River (inlet), 82, 109, 125, 151, 269, 272, 300, 301, 307.
Copper coins, 171.
Coppermine River, 8, 29.
Corne, de la, 5, 6, 7.
Coté, Gabriel, 242.
Cottonwood Cañon, 139, 159, 161.
Courtois, Francois, 111.
Courts, Canadian, jurisdiction of, 267, 268.
Cousins Inlet, 213.
Cumberland House, 28.
Curry, Thomas, 7.
Cushya River, 178.
Cust's House, 123.

Dalrymple, Alexander, 303.
Dawson, Dr G. M., 182, 188.
Dean Channel, 187, 197, 199, 200, 203, 207.
Deanery, the, Fortrose, 258, 277.
Dease, Peter Warren, 1, 271.
Deguthes Dinees, 63.
Delta of Mackenzie River, 63, 78; map of, 71.
Dene Indians, 167.
De Lorme, Pierre, 35.
Deserter's River, 140, 141, 153, 158, 160, 161, 166.
Des Rivières, 242.
Detroit, 23.
Dillon's Coffee House, 243.
Discovery, H.M.S., the, 196, 197.
Dixon, Captain George, 195, 303.
Dog, Mackenzie's, 112, 117; lost, 196, 219; found again, 220.
Dog Rib Indians, 53, 81, 82, 109, 125, 269.
Dog River, 39.
Dogs, watch, 305.
Douglas, Captain F., 305, 306, 308.
Dowie, Captain James, R.N., 22, 260.
Dowie, Isabella, 260; Kenneth, 255, 261.
Dowie, James Muir, 261.
Dowie, Menie Muriel, 261.
Dowie, Robert Chambers, 261.
Drake, Sir Francis, 1.
Ducette, Charles, 35, 111.
Duffin, 149.
Du Luth, 2.
Dunkeld, 254, 255.
Dunn, John, 206.
Du Quesne, 5.
Dutisme, 5.

Early Explorers, 1, 2; Simon Fraser, 280; John Finlay, 270; Samuel Black, 270; Robert Campbell, 270; Peter Pond, 299; Henry Kelsey, 4; Samuel Hearne, 29; North-West Company, 291; Hudson's Bay Company, 305; Jesuit Fathers, 2; David Thompson, 281.

East India Company, 11, 12, 236, 264, 266, 274, 275, 303, 314, 317; unpatriotic policy of, 275, 276.
Edward Point, 199, 200, 215.
Eight Mile Creek, 123.
Elcho Harbour, 200, 207, 208, 213.
Elk River, 29, 93, 272.
Ellice, Edward, 273.
Embarras River, 101.
English Chief, 35, 46, 47, 48, 66, 73, 77, 80, 81, 83, 85, 87, 88, 89, 91.
English (Churchill) River, 25, 29.
Entiaco River, 183.
Esquimaux, 60, 61, 63, 64, 65, 68, 234, 304.
Euchiniko River, 165.
European goods, 170, 171, 195, 301.

Fidler, 272.
Finlay, Jaco, 281.
Finlay, James, 7, 25, 242.
Finlay, James, jun., 25, 100, 103, 108, 124, 237, 280.
Finlay, John, 1, 28, 270.
Finlay River, 93, 125, 128, 225, 270, 280.
Fire at Avoch, 257.
Fish, 30, 43, 44, 58, 59, 75, 79, 84, 145, 161, 162, 170, 173, 175, 192, 194, 217, 218, 219, 220, 225, 272.
Fish traps, 182, 190.
Fitzgerald, Edward, 261.
Flattery, Cape, 70.
Flax, wild, 63.
Fleming, Sir Sandford, 279.
Fletcher, Douglas and James Douglas, 261.
Forbes, President, 19, 246.
Forde, J. P., 207, 262.
Forsyth, John, 240.
Forsyth, Richardson, & Co., 235, 236, 266.
Fort Chipewyan, 13, 30, 33, 35, 39, 92, 95, 96, 98, 100, 108, 228, 231, 233, 287, 299.
Fort George Cañon, 137, 140, 224.
Fortrose, 249, 251, 257, 277.
Forts—
Bourbon, 7, 28; Dauphin, 6, Des Prairies, 6, 25; Athabasca, 28, 29; Forks, 104, 111, 112, 121, 227, 228, 237, 271; Good Hope, 59, 241; Horseshoe, 237; Jonquière, 6; Lacorne, 7; La Reine, 3; Lafleur's, 237; George, 138, 183; Macpherson, 61; Norman, 86, 241; M'Loughlin, 206; Prince of Wales, 8; Providence, 28, 33, 92; Poskoiac, 6; Rae, 91; Rocky Mountain, 116, 123, 234, 280; Resolution, 28, 33, 45, 90; Rouge, 3; Simpson, 241; St Pierre, 6; Rivière Rouge, 234; St Charles, 5, 6; Smith, 40; St John, 116; Unalaska, 82, 149; Vermilion, 103; William, 13, 15, 237; York, 3, 9.
Fox, Captain Luke, 3.
France, cession of, 6.
Franklin, Sir John, 1, 64, 65, 187, 271.
Fraser, Isabella Mary, 257.
Fraser River, 70, 72, 106, 109, 115, 130; North Fork, 134; South Fork, 136, 143, 151, 164, 169, 177, 183, 222, 225, 274.
Fraser, Simon, 1, 70, 116, 123, 140, 211, 225, 231, 269, 280.
French River, 24.
French settlements, 6.
French traders, 5, 6, 240.
French trading posts, 3, 5, 6, 7.
Friendly Village, 189, 191, 196, 213, 220.
Frobishers, the, 8, 9, 25, 242, 289, 293.
Frog portage, 28.
Fur trade, 11, 274, 289, 292, 297, 316, 317.

Galiano, 72.
Gallatin, Albert, 252.
Gambling, 185.
Game, 41, 42, 43, 44, 47, 49, 52, 59, 60, 74, 76, 78, 84, 87, 88, 107, 113, 116, 123, 126, 176, 188, 214, 225, 226, 272.
Georgia, Gulf of, 70.
Geyer, Governor George, 4.
Giant cedars, 219.
Gilliam, Captain, 3.
"Goers and Comers," 12.
Grandchildren, Sir Alexander's, 258.
Grande Portage, La, 7, 10, 12, 13, 16, 25, 26, 27, 35, 95, 96, 98, 109, 231, 233, 234, 235, 275, 291, 295, 297.
Grand Isle, 103.
Grand Marais, 234.
Grand River, 74, 86, 234, 283.
Grant, Cuthbert, 28, 33, 39, 42, 45.
Gravel River, 52.
Gray, Captain Robert, 95, 149, 151, 224.
Great Bear Lake, 56, 59, 90.
Great Bear River, 56, 85, 241.
Great Lakes, 5.
Great River, 225.
Great Slave Lake, 15, 28, 29, 30, 33, 42, 43, 48, 80, 90, 93, 96, 234, 272, 299, 301.
Great Village, 193, 195, 196, 200, 204, 210, 213, 217, 219.
Green Bay, 197, 199, 204.
Gregory, John, 17, 24, 25, 241.
Gregory, M'Leod & Co., 17, 24, 25, 26.
Grenville, Rt. Hon. W. W., 302.
Grosseillier, 1.
Ground hogs, 187.

Haldimand, General, 236, 289.
Hallowell, Wm., 241.
Hamilton, Lieut. Governor-General, 289.
Hare Indian River, 59, 61, 241.
Hare Indians, 59, 81, 109, 125, 269.
Hearne, Samuel, 1, 8, 9, 29, 304.
Hendry, Anthony, 6, 8.
Hennepin, 1, 2, 3.
Henry, Alexander, 9, 242.
Heron Lake, 28.
Herrick Creek, 134, 135.
Historical Association, B.C., 210.
Historic Sites and Monuments Board, 210, 211, 262.
Hobart, Lord, 236, 264, 266, 268, 272, 311.
Holland, Captain John F. de B., 306, 307, 308, 309.
Holland, Major, 306.
Horn Mountains, 48.
Horses, 214.
Horseshoe Fort, 227.
Hudson, Captain, 1, 3.
Hudson's Bay, 3, 97, 240, 272, 303, 304, 307.
Hudson's Bay Company, 3, 4, 6, 9, 10, 22, 40, 97, 123, 177, 238, 240, 264, 266, 272, 273, 276, 297, 312, 315.
Hudson's Hope, 116, 123.
Hunter, General, 268, 311.
Huntingdon, Quebec, 242.

Il-ga-chuz Mountains, 180.
Illinois River, 5.
Independent traders, 8, 9.
Indian dress, ornaments, &c., 55, 61, 62, 76, 78, 169, 171, 173, 184, 191, 192, 195-6.
Indians, 45, 46, 47, 48, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 89, 91, 93, 103, 104, 106, 107, 108, 114, 115, 118, 123, 127, 140; houses of, 141, 142; woman slave, 147-8, 153; blind old, 157; singing, 170, 171, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181; houses, 182, 183, 189, 192, 193, 200, 202, 213, 215, 223, 267; Asiatic origin of, 213.
Indians (tribes)—
Atnah, 167, 168; Beaver, *quod vide*; Bella Bella, 201, 206, 209; Bella Coola, 150, 208; Blackfeet, 6; Carrier, 167, 168, 177, 213; Chilcotin, 168; Coast, 173, 183, 213; Dene (Tinneh), 167; Deguthee Dinais, 63; Dog Rib, *quod vide*; Iroquois, 35, 235; Knisteneaux, 147; Lillooet, 144, 168; Loocheux, *quod vide*; Lthau'dene, 168; Nagailas, 167; Neguia Dinais, 183; Nascud Dinais, 167, 168; Red Knives, 45, 46, 47, 48; Rocky Mountain, *vide* Sekonais; Red Fish Men, 177; Sekenais, *quod vide*; Shuswap, 143, 168; Slave, 53, 97; Sloua-Cuss-Dinais, 177; Takelne, 161; Thompson, 144; Yellow Knives, 46.
Indians, trading with, 4, 5, 6, 9, 29, 46, 59, 62, 81, 84, 108, 130, 148, 150, 160, 169, 170, 184, 196, 202, 223, 236, 281, 290, 292.
Intoxicants, 11, 13, 34, 46, 53, 90, 103, 106, 107, 124, 131, 133, 161, 221, 224, 238, 240, 243, 290.
Iroquois, 35, 135.
Isle à la Cache, 45.
Isle à la Crosse, 9, 27, 28.
Isle de Carreboeuf, 45.

James Creek, 130, 135, 224.
James, Thomas, 3.
Jesuits, 2, 3.
Jobert, Jean, 242.
Johnson, Sir John, 20.
Johnstone, James, 196.
Johnstown, 20.
Joilet, Louis, 1, 2, 3.

Kahylktst River, 188, 189.
Kaministiquia, 7, 13, 16, 237.
Kansas River, 6.
Keekwillie Houses, 65, 144, 145, 159.
Kelsey, Henry, 1, 4, 5.
Kent, Duchess of, 249.
Kent, Edward, Duke of, 239, 246, 249.
King [illegible]land, 198, 199, 200, 207.
King [illegible]ts, 240, 252.
Kinkil[illegible]sland, 198.
Kirkland, Alexander Mackenzie, 260, 261.
Kirkland, John, 22.
Kirkland, Major-General J. A. V., 261.
Kirkland, Margaret Dowie, 261.
Kirkland, Sir John, 258, 260, 261.
Kirkland, Sybilla Mackenzie, 261.
Knee Lake, 28.
Knighthood, 239.
Knisteneaux Indians, 147.
Kohasganko River, 187.

La Salle, 1, 2, 3.
Labouchere Channel, 198, 199.
Labrets, 196.
Lachine, 12, 35; canal, 268, 269.
Lafleur's Fort, 237.
Lakes—
Athabasca, *quod vide*; Clear, 28; Clearwater, 101; Claire, 101; Chootanli, 166; Beaver, 28; Buffalo, 28; Bourbon, 294; Alempigon, 295; Black Bear Island,

28; Cedar, 7, 28; Cushya, 175, 178; Clus-cus, 175, 176, 177; Erie, 23; Eliguck, 175 (Uhlghak), 181, 182; Euchiniko, 175, 176, 177; Gatchô, 182, 183; La Clie, 290; Huron, 12, 290; Ontario, 23, 268, 290; Pepin, 6; Puntze, 223; Heron, 28; Klootch-oot-a, 175, 179; Malaput, 182; Little, 28, 48; of the Hills, 29, 33, 35, 92; la Pluie (Rainy Lake), 97, 293; Knee, 28; Mouse, 28; Lac des Carriboux, 108; Mamawa, 101; la Martre, 90; of the Woods (Lac le Bois), 5, 12, 25, 291, 294, 301, 306, 307; M'Leod, 126; Superior, 7, 12, 25, 291, 294, 301, 306, 307; Thutade, 93, 270; Kluscoil, 175; Tsa-cha, 175, 179; Tse-tzi, 175, 179; des Serpents, 26; Tsil-be-kuz (Cultus Coolee), 175, 179; Winnipeg, 28, 291, 293; Pine Island, 9; Stinking, 128; Sturgeon, 8, 9, 28, 295; White Man's, 81; Winnipegosis, 7; Great Bear, 56, 59, 90; Otter, 28.
La Londe, 24.
Landmann, Colonel, 35, 243.
Landry, Joseph, 35, 111.
Last Camp, 210.
Le Bœuf, 5.
Le Gardeur de St Pierre, 5.
Le Roux, Laurent, 25, 28, 33, 34, 35, 42, 45, 46, 48, 90, 91, 96.
Letters—
A. Dalrymple to Sir Evan Nepean, 305, 307.
Alexander Mackenzie to John Sullivan, Under Secretary, 266, 311.
Alexander Mackenzie to Lord Hobart, 265.
Alexander Mackenzie to Roderick Mackenzie, 108, 231, 232, 236, 250, 254, 282.
Captain Holland to Sir Evan Nepean, 308.
David Ogden to Sir Evan Nepean, 302.
Duke of Kent to Alexander Mackenzie, 248.
General Hamilton to Lord Sydney, 289.
Isaac Ogden to David Ogden, 299.
Kenneth Dowie to Roderick Mackenzie, 254.
The Frobishers to Governor Haldimand, 293.
Wentzel to Roderick M'Kenzie, 270.
William Mackenzie to Alex. Geo. Mackenzie, 277.
Lessey, Matthew, 242.
Le Vieux Grand Lac River, 52.
Liard River, 49, 89, 90, 92, 241, 281.
Lignite, burning, 56, 85, 86.
Lillooet Indians, 144, 168.
Little Company, 236.
Little Red River, 34, 101, 234.
Livingstone, Duncan, 234.
Lobsticks, 64, 65, 77.
Long Sault, 25.
London, 151, 239, 247, 256.
Loon River, 35, 103.
Loocheux Indians, 61, 63, 77, 234, 269.
Lthau'dene Indians, 168.

M'Beath, George, 242.
M'Crae, David, 242.
M'Donald, Finan, 281.
M'Donnell, Colonel, 20.
M'Dougall, James, 281.
M'Gillivray, William, 13, 15, 26, 27, 35, 237, 241, 243, 250, 268.
M'Gills, the, 242.
M'Gregor River, 134, 135, 224.
M'Iver, John, 19, 20; Isabella, 19.
Mackay, Alexander, 108, 111, 116, 118, 119, 122, 126, 133, 152, 153, 154, 156, 161, 168, 169, 189, 218, 219, 220, 226; Cape, 210.
Mackenzie, Alexander, explorer and fur-trader, 1, 3, 16, 17; descent of, 18; birth, 18; parents, 18, 19; migration to New York, 19; left in charge of aunts, 20; removal to Canada, 20; enters service Gregory, M'Leod & Co., business training, 23; at Detroit, 23; admitted to partnership, 24; at Grande Portage, 25; English River, 25; sent to Athabasca, 27; route to Athabasca Fort, 28; visits Rainy Lake, 29; builds Fort Chipewyan, 30; preparing for voyage to Arctic Ocean, 33; beginning the journey, his companions, 35; passes Peace River, 39; at Great Slave Lake, 42; enters the unknown Mackenzie River, 48; rapid travelling, 51; reaches the delta, 63; the Arctic Ocean, 66; whales, 67; on Whale Island, 68; begins the return journey, 69; quarrel with English chief, 89; return to Great Slave Lake, 90; as physician, 91; arrival at Chipewyan, 92; distance travelled, 92; dangers of the journey, 93; goes to Grande Portage, 96; his relations with Simon M'Tavish, 96; return to Chipewyan, reorganises Athabasca district, 96; meets Philip Turner, 98; proceeds to England, 99; again at Chipewyan, 100; ascends the Peuce

River, 100; Smoky River, 104; winters at Forks Fort, skill as medicine-man, 105; starts on western voyage, 111; at Rocky Mountain Portage, 121; ascends Parsnip River, 125; meets Sekenais Indians and learns of Fraser River, 128, 129; crosses the Divide, 130; descends the Fraser, 135; Fort George Cañon, 138; Cottonwood Cañon, 139; Quesnelle River, 140; unfriendly natives, 141; learns of new route to the Western Sea, 150; has trouble with Indians, 153; his companions discontented, 156; builds new canoe, 159; the West Road River, 162; the question of Mackenzie's route from Fraser River, 164; native tribes, 167; begins overland journey to the sea, 169; a capricious guide, 171; he reaches Friendly Village, 189; Mackenzie's trail, 168; descends Bella Coola River, 191; Great Village, 192; again acts as medicine-man, 194; Rascal's Village, 196; at last, the Pacific, 197; on the Western Sea, 197; Mackenzie's Rock, 201; his inscription thereon, 205; tracing his sea travel, 206; he begins his return journey, 215; is attacked by Indians, 216; his kindness to sick Indian, 220; his dog, 219; back to the Fraser River, 221; at Forks Fort again, 227; his reward, 228; farewell to Chipewyan, 234; the first-fruits of his explorations, 234; visits Lieut.-Governor Simcoe, 235; again in England, 236; breaks with North-West Company, 238; in London and publishes his book, 238; is knighted, 239; returns to Canada, 239; is signatory to merger, 240; in Montreal, 235, 240, 241; elected to Parliament, 241; the Beaver Club, 242; relations with Astor, 244; he leaves Canada, 245; opposes Lord Selkirk's colonisation project, 245; his marriage, 246; Avoch, 247; London residence, 247, 248; association with Duke of Kent, 248; his life at Avoch, 249; his children, 250, 251; his illness, 251; death, 254; interment, 258; personal appearance, his character, 256; nicknames, 256; his grandchildren, 258; fire at Avoch, 257; portrait, 261; memorials, 262; his achievements, 264; as Imperialist, 264, 269; the Lachine Canal, 269; the Mackenzie impulse, 281; his inspiration, 282; character, 283; Mackenzie Park, 285; Mackenzie's journeys and Holland's projected explorations, 309.

Mackenzie Clan, the, 246.

Mackenzie Highway, 285.

Mackenzie, Kenneth, 18, 20; Murdoch, 18; Colin and Kenneth, 18; Sybilla, 19, 22, 258, 260; Margaret, 19, 22, 260; Allan, 20; Donald, 19, 252; George (II.), 246; Alexander of Ballone, 246; Captain John, 246; Rev. William, 246; Simon, 246; Henry, 251; Margaret Elizabeth, 247, 259, 260; George of Avoch, 246, 247; Thomas, of Applecross, 248; Lieut.-Colonel Alexander, 251; Margaret Geddes, 250, 253, 257, 259, 260; George, 250, 253, 257, 259; Alexander George, 250, 253, 257, 258, 269, 277; Kenneth Thomas, 258; Alastair, 258; George, 258; Alexandra Isabel, 258; Geddes Margaret, 258; William of Gairloch, 277; James, 237, 251; Thomas, 248.

Mackenzie, Lady Geddes, 246, 247, 249, 253, 254, 256, 257.

Mackenzie River, 48; delta, 63, 68; Grand River, 74, 82, 86, 92, 111, 130, 241, 258, 269, 270, 271, 281, 283.

Mackenzie River delta, map of, 71.

M'Kenzie, Roderick, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 35, 46, 95, 96, 97, 99, 100, 108, 109, 228, 231, 233, 236, 239, 241.

Mackenzie, Sir Alexander & Co., 240.

Mackenzie's Park, 284.

Mackenzie's Rock, 201, 262.

M'Leod, A. N., 17, 24, 46.

M'Namara, John, 242.

M'Tavish, Simon, 10, 15, 25, 96, 228, 234, 235, 238, 240, 251, 280.

Mallets, the, 5.

Mann, Colonel, 268.

Maps, of Mackenzie delta, 71; of Quatre Fourches, 102; of sea route from Bella Coola to Mackenzie's Rock, 212, 257, 299, 304, 307.

Maritime Fur Traders, 32, 79, 150, 173, 195, 202, 214, 300.

Marmots, 187.

Marquette, Jacques, 1, 2, 3.

Masatcho Point, 199.

Maskelyne Point, 205.

Masson, Rev. Dr D., 276, 277.

Mathesons, the Bennetsfield, 258.

Meares, Captain John, 149, 151, 195.

Medicine-men (Shamans), 194.

Melbost, 19.
Memorials, 241, 257, 259, 262, 263.
Menzies, Archibald, 200.
Menzies Point, 199.
Mer de l'Ouest, post of, 6.
Michilimackinac, 25, 292, 293, 296, 306.
Middleton, Captain, 303.
Millbank Sound, 206.
Milnes, Lieut.-Governor Sir Robert, 268.
Mississippi River, 6.
Missouri River, 3.
Monsters, 53, 60, 81.
Montreal, 100, 135, 239, 240, 241, 244, 266, 268, 275, 293, 296, 316, 317.
Montreal, merchants of, 8, 10, 17.
Mosquitoes, 45, 52, 57, 74, 161, 178.
Mountain River, 49, 56, 300.
Mount Selwyn, 124.
Mountain Portage, 40, 41.
Monterey, 206.
Muir, Mary, 261.
Mulinearn, 255.
Mulnain, Mulvain, 254, 255.
Muskeg, 88.

Na-bes-che River, 124.
Nagailas Indians, 167.
Napoleon, Emperor, Mackenzie's book, 257, 262, 276, 278; plans against Great Britain, 277, 278.
Nascud Dinais, Indians (Nascud Denee, Nazkudene, Nazkutenne, Natcudene, Nascu'denes), 167, 168.
Nation River, 126.
Native ceremonies, 54.
Navy Hall, 235.
Nazco River, 165, 174, 175.
Neave, Sir Richard, 273.
Nechaco River, 138, 139, 182, 183.
Neguia Dinais Indians, 183.
Nelson River, 3, 8, 273.
Nepean, Sir Evan, 302, 305, 308.
New Caledonia, 281.
New Establishment, 100, 124, 237, 280.
New Orleans, 6.
New Year's Day, 106.
Niagara, 235.
Nipawee, 7.
Nootka, 143, 149, 150, 164, 196, 266, 267, 314, 316; convention, 269.
Norman, Fort, 86, 241.
Norman, Sir Harry, 261.
Norse navigators, 1.
Northmen, 13, 131.
North Nahanni River, 51.
North-West Coast, 264, 265, 267, 269, 312, 314.
North-West Company, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 26, 27, 28, 31, 34, 164, 234, 236, 237, 238, 240, 241, 244, 264, 266, 267, 268, 269, 272, 273, 274, 276, 280, 281, 289; memorial of, 290; explorations of, 291, 294, 303.
North-West Passage, 8, 73, 81, 303.
Notes—
A, 289; B, 298; C, 299; D, 303; E, 309.
Norton, Governor, 8.
Norton Sound, 82, 151.
Noue, La, 2.
Nusk'Elot (village), 191.
Nutleig (village), 189.

Obituary—
Kenneth Mackenzie, 20; Sir Alexander Mackenzie, 254; Lady Mackenzie, 257; George Alexander Mackenzie and wife, 258; George Mackenzie, 259; Margaret Geddes Mackenzie, 259.
Observatory Inlet, 205.
Ocean Falls, 213.
Ogden, Judge Isaac, 298, 299; David, 289, 299.
Ogilvie, William, 86; John, 240.
Ohio River, 5.
Old Establishment, 100, 103.
Oregon country, 264, 267; history of, 206.
Oregon River. *Vide* Columbia River.
Osage River, 5.
Ottawa River, 12, 25.
Otter Lake, 28.
Ottertail River, 124.
Overland journey, 169 *et seq.*

Pacific Fur Company, 244, 252, 275.
Pacific Ocean, 70, 72, 81, 95, 125; Stinking Lake, 128, 130, 163, 164, 196, 197, 266, 272, 274, 299.
Packing, 169.
Pack River, 125, 134, 281.
Palmer's Tavern, 243.
Pangman, Peter, 17.
Parliamentary career, Mackenzie's, 242.
Parsnip River, 115, 124, 134, 163, 225, 280.
Pays d'en haut, 233, 242.
Peace Point, 101.
Peace River, 34, 38, 39, 40, 92, 100; the Chutes of, 101, 105, 111, 113, 116; upper rapids of, 118; cañon of, 122; forks of, 124, 129, 154, 155, 163, 224, 225, 234, 270, 280, 283.
Peel River, 270, 281.
Pelican, white, 41.
Pelly River, 270.
Perkins & Co., 275.
Perrone, 237.
Petroglyphs, 208.
Petroleum, 80.

Pigeon River, 12, 237.
Pine River, 101, 116.
Pine Island Lake, 9.
Plover, H.M.S. the, 65.
Point Barrow, 68, 70.
Point Separation, 64, 65.
Pollock, Duncan, 25, 26.
Pond, Peter, 9, 17, 25, 27, 28, 29, 33, 97, 242, 289, 298, 301, 302, 304, 307.
Pond's map, 97, 299.
Porcupine Cove, 198, 199, 215.
Porcupine River, 270.
Porkeaters, 12.
Portage de l'Isle, 295.
Portage des Noyes, 28, 91.
Portage Frog, 28.
Portage Grande. *Vide*.
Portage la Prairie, 3.
Portage Rat, 28.
Portage Roche Rouge, 28.
Portage Rocky Mountain, 101, 121, 122, 128.
Portland Canal, 205.
Portlock, Captain, 303.
Port Nelson, 3.
Portrait, Mackenzie's, 261, 262.
"Potties," the, 237.
Prairies du Chien, 6.
"Preliminaries," Mackenzie's, 264, 268, 314.
Premier, Le. *Vide* Simon Fraser.
Presq'ile, 5.
Prince Rupert, 3.
Prince William Sound, 307.
Puntataencut River, 140, 159.
Puntze Lake, 223.

Quarrellers, 63.
Quatre Fourches River, 38, 101; map of, 102.
Quebec, 24, 244, 308.
Quesnelle, Jules Maurice, 149.
Quesnelle River, 140, 141, 153.

Radisson, 1.
Rainy Lake (Lac la Pluie), 28, 29, 97, 275.
Ramparts, the, 58, 82, 84, 241.
Rapids Bouillé, 101.
Rapids of the Damned, 39.
Rapids of the Drowned, 28, 39.
Rapids qui ne parle pas, 124.
Rascal's Village, 196, 217.
Rat Portage, 28.
"Ready Money John," 19.
Red Fish Men, 177.
Red Knife Indians, 45, 46, 47, 48.
Red River, 6, 26, 238, 245.
Restoration Bay, 197, 202.
Richardson, Dr, 1, 64, 271.
Richardson, John, 240, 266, 267, 313.
Rio de San Roque, 149, 163.
River of the West. *Vide* Yukon River.
Rivers—
Barnard, 124; Beaver, 58; Bad, 130, 135, 224; Bella Coola, *vide*; Blackwater, *quod vide*; Chilcotin, 223; Carcajou, 56; Carbon, 123; Churchill, 4, 8, 9, 28; Clearwater, 28, 124; Columbia (Oregon), *quod vide*; Cook's, *quod vide*; Coppermine, 8, 29; Cushya, 178; Dog, 39; Deserter's, *vide*; Elk, 29, 93, 272; Embarras, 101; English (Churchill), 25, 29; Entiako, 183; Euchiniko, 165, 174; Finlay, *vide*; Fraser, *vide*; French, 25; Gravel, 52; Grand, 74, 86, 234, 283; Great, 225; Great Bear River, 56, 85, 241; Illinois, 5; Kahylktst, 188, 189; Kansas, 6; Kohasganko, 187; Kaministiquia, 7, 13, 16, 237; Liard, *vide*; Little Red, 34, 101, 234; Le Vieux Grand Lac, 52; Loon, 35, 103; M'Gregor, 134, 135, 224; Mackenzie, *quod vide*; Mississippi, 6; Missouri, 3; Mountain, 49, 56, 300; Nabesche, 124; Nechako, 138, 139, 182, 185; Nation, 126; Nazko, 165, 174, 175; Nelson, 3, 8, 273; North Nahanni, 51; Ohio, 5; Osage, 5; Ottawa, 12, 25; Ottertail, 124; Pack, 126, 134, 281; Parsnip, *vide*; Peace, *vide*; Peel, 270, 281; Pelly, 270; Pigeon, 12, 237; Pine, 101, 116; Porcupine, 270; Puntataencut, 140, 159; Quatre Fourches, 38, 101, 102; Quesnelle, 140, 141, 153; Red, 6, 26, 238, 245; Rio de San Roque, 149, 163; River of the West, *vide* Yukon; Rocher, 28; St Joseph's, 5; St Mary's, 25, 271; St Lawrence, 23, 240, 244; Salmon, 136, 182, 183, 186; Saskatchewan, *vide*; Sinew, 116; Slave, *vide*; Smoky, *vide*; Swan, 238; Tanyabunkut (Takia), 183, 187; Tsantsed-ako, 178; Tsatleanootz, 191; Tsul-tel-ako, 187; Wabash, 5; Wabiskawa, 103; Uhlgako, 175, 180, 181, 182; Uhlgat, 183; West Road, *vide* Blackwater; Willow, 51; Winnipeg, 28; Winter Road, 81; Wisconsin, 5; Yellow Knife, 49, 96.
Rivière de Quatre Fourches, 38, 101.
Roche Rouge Portage, 28.
Rocher River, 28.
Rocky Mountain Fort, 234.
Rocky Mountain House, 116, 123, 280.
Rocky Mountain House, Old, 234.
Rocky Mountain Indians (Sekenais),

Rocky Mountain Portage, 101, 121, 122, 226.
Rocky Mountains, 3, 34, 50, 72, 92, 93, 100, 117, 163, 270, 274, 299.
Rosehaugh, 250, 261.
Ross, John, 25, 27.
Route, overland, Mackenzie's, 164, 172, 174, 188.
Royal Yorks, 20.
Russian posts, 73, 109, 164.
Ryland, H. W., 266, 267, 313.

St Ann, 24.
St Germain, Venance, 295.
St Joseph's Island, 12, 35.
St Joseph's River, 5.
St Lawrence River, 23, 240, 244.
St Mary's River, 25, 271.
Salmon River, 136, 182, 186, 186.
San Roque River, 149, 163.
San Sault Rapids, 56, 57, 58, 84.
Saskatchewan River, 6, 8, 24, 25, 240, 272.
Sault Ste Marie, 12, 271.
Seaforth, Earl of, 18, 246.
Sea-Otter Harbour, 266, 267.
Sekenais Indians, 116, 127, 128, 184, 185, 213.
Selkirk, Thomas, Earl of, 246.
Sergeant, Governor, 4.
Shamans, 194.
Shuswap Indians, 143, 168.
Simcoe, Lieut.-Governor J. G., 235, 309.
Simpson Fort, 241.
Simpson, Thomas, 1, 271.
Sinew River, 116.
Sir John's Bush (Scotch Bush), 20.
Slave Indians, 53, 97.
Slave River, 28, 34, 39, 40, 43, 44, 91, 101, 299, 300, 301, 306.
Sloua-Cuss Dinais, 177.
Smith, Harlan I., 208, 284.
Smith's Landing, 28, 39, 40.
Smoky River, 104, 105, 109, 112, 116, 228.
Soocomlick, Chief, 220.
South Sea Company, 264, 266, 314.
Spanish navigators, 72, 95, 143.
Spirit Stones, 50.
"Square, The," 257.
Steinbruick, John, 35.
Stinking Lake, 128.
Stornoway, 18, 19, 21, 22, 245.
Stuart, John, 237; Peter, 24.
Sturgeon Lake; 8, 9, 28, 295.
Sullivan, John, Under Secretary, 266, 268.
Swan River, 238.
Sydney, Lord, 289.

Tablets, memorial, 241, 262, 263.
Tacoutche Tesse, 224, 225, 274, 280.
Takelne Indians, 168.
Tanyabunkut River (Takia or Taitaczi), 183, 187.
Thessalon, 25.
Thieving Indians, 195, 202, 216, 223, 293.
Thompson, David, 1, 15, 34, 112, 116, 211, 269, 281.
Thompson Indians, 144.
Thompson, John, 234.
Tinneh (tenne) Indians, 167.
Todd & M'Gill, 293.
Totem poles, 182, 188, 193.
Toy Creek, 136.
Tracking, 78.
Trading posts, 281, 294, 316.
Trail overland, 172, 174, 176, 223.
Treaty with U.S., 252, 291.
Tsan-tsed-a-ko River, 178.
Tsatleanootz River, 191.
Tsi-tsul Mountain, 187, 188.
Tsul-tel-ako River, 187.
Turner, Philip, 98, 302, 304, 309.
Tyrrell, J. B., 1.

Uhlgako River, 175, 180, 181, 182.
Uhlgat River, 183.
Umfreville, Edward, 295.
Unalaska Fort, 82, 149.
Unjigah River. *Vide* Peace River.

Valdez, 72.
Vancouver, Captain George, 72, 143, 196, 199, 205, 206.
Vancouver Island, 72, 143.
Vancouver, Washington, U.S., 224.
Vaudrouil, M., 103.
Venango, 5.
Verendrye and sons, 1, 2, 3, 5.
Vermin, 172, 218.
Vespucius, 1.
Victoria, Queen, 239, 248, 260, 309.
Village, ancient Indian, 201, 207, 208.
"Voyages," Mackenzie's, 238.
Voyageurs, 36, 37, 38, 40, 118, 127, 143, 169, 176, 185, 193, 203, 217, 218, 227, 296.

Wabash River, 5.
Wabiskawa River, 103.
Wadin, 27, 304.
Wegg, Gov. H. B. Co., 305.
Wentzel, W. F., 237, 241, 252.
Western Sea, the, 2, 6, 17, 33, 69, 70, 73, 94, 149, 211, 230, 236, 301.
West Road River. *Vide* Blackwater River.
Whale Fisheries, 316, 317.

Whale Island, 68, 70, 73, 92, 205.
Whales, 67, 68.
White Man's Lake, 81.
White Partridge, murder of, 107.
Willow River, 51.
Winnipeg, 3.
Winnipeg Lake, 28, 291; river, 28.
Wintering partners, 10, 234, 235, 238.
Winter Road River, 81.
Wisconsin River, 5.
Wolves, 87.
Woodpecker Island, 224.

X. Y. Company, the, 236, 237, 240, 244, 264, 266, 267, 280.

Yellow Knife Indians, 46.
Yellow Knife River, 49, 96.
York factory, 3, 9.
Yukon River, 81, 82, 97, 109, 125; river of the West, 151, 269, 270.

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